





THE MADISON COURIER

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025

Serving the Courier area since 1837

NEWSSTAND • \$1.25

Roads improving from snowstorm but threat of more snow Friday

BY BOB DEMAREE

The cleanup from the winter storm that blasted the region Sunday and Monday has continued this week with progress made in clearing roads but more still to do as another winter storm is being forecast for Friday.

“We have up to four more inches of snow starting Friday,” said Jefferson County Emergency Management Director Matt True, noting the amount “depends on where that line of storm system falls. It looks like most of the bulk will be in the southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee area. We’re on that line where

snow will hit more for us than the ice.”

Throughout the area, all counties have downgraded from the highest warning levels. Jefferson and Switzerland counties in Indiana, that had been under a Travel Warning (Red) advisory early in the week, were both at Travel Watch (Orange) on Thursday. Carroll and Trimble counties in Kentucky, that had been categorized at Level 3 snow emergency, each downgraded to lower levels Thursday with Trimble at Level 2 meaning necessary travel and Carroll at Level 1 advising caution.

SEE SNOW/PAGE A7



After a winter storm dumped up to 9 inches of snowfall on the region, two of the more pressing tasks were digging out — most of the major roadways were cleared by Wednesday but sidewalks and parking lots like this one in downtown Milton were still being worked on — and restocking grocery shelves with bread — a Wonder bread truck was rolling through the U.S. 421 intersection on its way to do just that. There were plenty of cancellations, several slide-offs and brief localized power outages, but no injuries from the storm. Flurries were still falling Wednesday and the next wave of wintry mix is scheduled to arrive Friday with up to 4 inches of snowfall.

Mark Campbell



Bob Demaree

Madison firefighters close in on clearing the scene of a residential fire in the 200 block of West Second Street on Tuesday after battling the blaze about 30 minutes and spending another 3 hours on cleanup.

Firefighters respond to 3 blazes

BY THE COURIER STAFF

Local firefighters responded to three fire runs over the past few days including a structure fire that damaged an historic home on West Second Street Tuesday in downtown Madison and a fire that destroyed a mobile home near Deputy on Monday.

According to Madison Fire Chief Bill DeVries, the Jefferson County Central Dispatch received a 911 call reporting fire in the 200 block of West Second Street at approximately 5:09 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 7. Madison fire and police responded and found smoke coming from the upstairs windows of the two story brick structure owned by Zackary Hatton and lived in by his grandfather Bob Wallace.

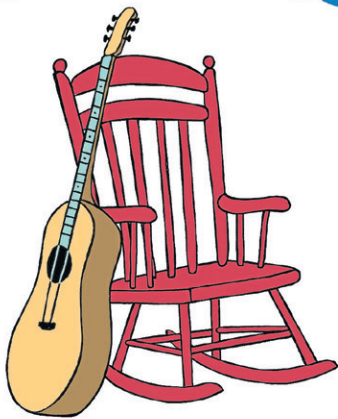
SEE FIRE/PAGE A7



Madison firefighter John Schoenstein prepares to open the valve on a hydrant as fellow firefighter Mike Grecco organizes hose while responding to a house fire Tuesday in the 200 block of Second Street.

Mark Campbell

KINDRED FOLK SOCIETY



Kindred Folk Society kicks off music series

The Kindred Folk Society is kicking off their “Still Folkin’ Music Series” this Friday, Jan. 10, with a concert at Red Bicycle Hall.

The band Kindred Valley, a crowd favorite from the recent Mad Hop Music Fest back in November, will be performing at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at MadTixEvents.com. You can take my word for it, this band is great! But if you’d like to see for yourself, just search YouTube for “Kindred Valley Whistle” and you’ll see what I mean.

The Still Folkin’ Series is actually six concerts in total, five of them at Red Bicycle Hall and one at Thomas Family Winery. Basically one each month, January through June.

You can see the complete schedule at KindredFolkSociety.org. The next show is Tim Grimm at Thomas Family on Feb. 8, so you may want to mark your calendar now for that gem of a performance.

The Kindred Folk Society, for those who don’t know, is a group of folk and roots music-minded folks who have been keeping the flame alive for this very American and authentic style of music. It’s a genre born out of the Appalachian mountains, the deep South, and the Atlantic lowlands. There’s often a banjo involved, frequently a fiddle, and an emphasis on harmonies and melody.



CHARLIE ROHLFLING
CHARLIE’S BEAT

SEE MUSIC/PAGE A6

Madison seeking new Parks Director after departure of Klein

BY BOB DEMAREE

The city of Madison is searching for a new director of parks and recreation following an announcement Wednesday that Scott Klein is no longer with the department.

Klein had served as Parks Director since April 3, 2023, after replacing Matt Woolard, who resigned effective the end of March that year and is now director of Parks and Recreation for the city of Plainfield, Indiana.

“Mr. Klein is no longer with the city,” said Madison Mayor Bob Courtney. “We will continue to invest in our community’s health and wellness and will be seeking a new director over the coming weeks.”

In a press release issued by the city, Courtney said, “Our parks and recreational programs are essential to the health, well-being, and quality of life of our residents, and we remain dedicated to delivering excep-

tional experiences for all who use our facilities and participate in our programming.”

Madison City Council on Dec. 30 held a special meeting to adopt a resolution to transfer \$575,000 from the utilities department to the parks department after revenue-producing parks properties either under performed or cost more to operate than their budget allocations in 2024.

The press released added

that during the transition all parks services — including recreational programs, facility rentals, and ongoing projects — will continue without interruption. The city’s leadership team is working closely with Parks Department staff to ensure smooth operations and continuity of service.

Additionally, the press release stated that planning is underway for the opening of our major parks facilities such as

Sunrise Golf Course, Riverview Campground, Crystal Beach Aquatic Park, and Rucker Sports Complex in the spring. Additionally, active programming is constantly underway at the Senior Center and Brown Gym.

Klein, a former director of operations at Hanover College, previously served as director of facilities and grounds for the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, North Carolina.

KSP investigating body at Dollar General Store in Campbellsburg

BY PAXTON MEDIA GROUP
CAMPBELLSBURG, Ky. — A Henry County woman was found dead Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2025, in the parking lot of the Dollar General Store in Campbellburg, according to a news release from the Kentucky State Police.

The woman has been identified as Rebecca Skeen, 56, of Smithfield, Kentucky. No cause of death has been determined, according to the state police, but multiple troopers were at the scene Wednesday to investigate.

Troopers were called to the business at around 6:30 a.m. and located the woman, who was unre-

sponsive. She was pronounced dead at the scene by the Henry County Coroner’s Office, according to state police.

According to obituary information posted by Prewitt Funeral Home in New Castle, Kentucky, Rebecca “Becky” Allen Skeen is actually from Jericho, Kentucky. She was a Pre-K teacher at Butterfly Garden Academy in Campbellburg, which is located just across U.S. 421 from the Dollar General Store where her body was found.

Henry County EMS assisted. The incident remains under investigation.

NEWS OF RECORD

JEFFERSON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER

LODGINGS
January 6, 2025
Michael Troy West, 29, Branchville, Indiana, to serve 119 jail on a court-ordered sentencing. No bond.

January 7, 2025
John D. Shelton, 41, Lexington, Indiana, on a Jefferson County bench warrant. Bond \$5,000 cash.

January 8, 2025
Kelly Ruth Campbell, 38, Madison, for Possession of Methamphetamine and Possession of a Syringe, both Level 6 felonies; Manufacture of Paraphernalia, a Class B misdemeanor; and Visiting a Common Nuisance, a Class C misdemeanor. Bond \$1,000 cash.

William Robert March, 37, Madison, for Possession of Methamphetamine and Possession of a Syringe, both Level 6 felonies; and Visiting a Common Nuisance and Possession of Paraphernalia, both Class C misdemeanor. Bond \$1,000 cash.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS

JEFFERSON COUNTY
January 3, 2025
Comeaux Rental Properties LLC to Michael Aldridge and Kasey Aldridge, 2213 Lanier Drive, Madison.

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis Properties Inc. to Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis Properties Inc., 414 East Main Street, Madison.

Marjorie Ginn to Gary L. Ginn and David W. Ginn (transferees death), 2101 Allen Street, Madison.

Wildfires lead to harrowing escapes

By foot, car or the grace of strangers survivors fled from flames

PASADENA, Calif. — Flames and pillars of smoke rose from both sides of the road and a woman yelled in panic as firefighters ushered a crowd of fleeing residents along. Aaron Samson positioned his 83-year-old father-in-law behind his blue walker, and they began shuffling down the sidewalk.

“My father-in-law was

saying, ‘Aaron, if we ever in a position where the flames are right there, you just run and leave me here,’ ” Samson recounted Wednesday.

It didn’t get to that point. For the second time in a matter of hours, a good Samaritan picked them up, then drove them to safety in Santa Monica.

Their escape came as thousands of people fled wildfires in the Los Angeles area that turned picturesque neighborhoods into smoldering wasteland, with chimneys or wrought-iron staircases about all that remained of homes. Driven by

SEE **FLAME/PAGE A3**

OBITUARIES

Roy Dale Konkle

Roy Dale Konkle, age 68 of Jeffersonville, IN, and formerly of Madison, entered this life on Sept. 25, 1956, in Madison, IN. He was the loving son of the late Raymond Dale and Mary Lucille Phillips Konkle. He was raised in Madison and attended the First Baptist Church in downtown Madison. Roy was born handicapped and attended Madison Consolidated Schools. He had many devoted caregivers during his life. Currently, he was with the Affinity Care Group in Jeffersonville, IN. Many of his caregivers thoroughly enjoyed working with Roy who occupied a special spot in their hearts. Several even stayed in contact with him when they changed jobs. Roy’s favorite hobby was listening to music. After hearing a few notes of a song, he generally could identify the name of the song as well as the artist. He had worked early in life for Sandstone Industries. Roy died on Monday, Dec. 30, 2024, at 9:10 p.m. at the Clark Memorial Hospital in Jeffersonville, IN. A

Roy will be missed by his caregiver and cousins, Teresa Lichlyter of Madison, IN; his aunts, Martha Phillips of Madison, IN, Luella Lee of Madison, IN; his special cousin, Paula Konkle Ison of Indianapolis, IN; his stepbrothers, Steve Bentz and Greg Bentz;



several other cousins and other relatives. He was preceded in death by his father, Raymond Dale Konkle, his mother, Mary Lucille Phillips Konkle Bentz, his sister, Shirley Ann Konkle, and his stepfather, Manly Wilson Bentz, Jr.

Memorial services will be conducted Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, at 11 a.m., by Pastor Andrea Lichlyter at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Interment will follow in the Dupont Cemetery in Dupont, IN.

Friends may visit Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, from 10 — 11 a.m., at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Dupont Cemetery. Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

Jean Hilbert Shelton

Jean Hilbert Shelton, age 99, of McCordsville, IN, formerly of Hanover, entered this life on July 25, 1925, at home on the Hilbert family farm in Madison. She was the loving daughter of Paul Theodore and Henrietta Heck Hilbert. Jean died on Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024, at 4:24 p.m. at the Traditions at Brookside in McCordsville, IN, with her family by her side.

Jean will be missed by her loving daughter, Mary Ann Jacobs and her husband, Rick of McCordsville, IN; her grandchildren, Elizabeth “Liz” Geisler and her husband, Dan, Thomas Jacobs and his wife, Cayleigh, Paul Jacobs, and Claire Jacobs; her great grandchildren, Robert and Frederick Geisler; her brother in law and sister in law, Roy and Jeanie Shelton of Carmel, IN; her nieces and her nephews, Sue Geyman (Michael), Kay Melton (Tom), Janet Dierkes, Joni Bear (Mike), Corny Eastman (Vicky), Michele Eastman, Joe Eastman (Celia), David Shelton (Courtney), Linda Walker, Scott Shelton (Amy), Jeff Shelton (Doris), Jeri Custodero (Mark).

She was preceded in death by her father, Paul Theodore Hilbert, her mother, Henrietta K. Heck Hilbert, her beloved husband of 68 years, Van E. Shelton, died May 17, 2016, her son, John Evan Shelton, her sister, Mary Elizabeth Hilbert Dierkes.

Memorial Mass will be conducted Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, at 11 a.m., by Father Christopher A. Craig at the St. Patrick Catholic Chapel, 305 West State Street in Madison, IN. Interment will follow in the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery, 1415 North Gate Road in Madison, IN.

Friends may call Saturday from 9:30 — 11 a.m., at the St. Patrick Catholic Chapel, 305 West State Street in Madison, IN.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Prince of Peace Catholic Church for the renovation of St. Patrick Catholic Chapel.

Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

John Bruce Rowlison

John Bruce Rowlison, age 77, of Madison, IN, entered this life on Jan. 21, 1947, in Madison, IN. He was the loving son of the late John Calvin and Helen B. Larimore Rowlison. Bruce died on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, at 11:20 a.m. at the River Terrace Health Campus in Madison, IN.

Bruce will be missed by his loving daughters, Helen Coots and her husband, Robert of Madison, IN, Feather

Jester and her husband, James of Madison, IN; his grandchildren, Presley, Gracie, Colton, Addyson, and Kaydence; several nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his father, John Calvin Rowlison, his mother, Helen B. Larimore Rowlison, his beloved wife of 43 years, Martha Ann Beach Rowlison, died Dec. 22, 2015, his brother, William C. Rowlison, and

his sister in law, Janet McDarment Rowlison.

Funeral services will be conducted on Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2025, at 11 a.m., by Pastor Mike Barnes at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Interment will follow in the Brooksbury Cemetery in Brooksbury, IN.

Friends may visit Monday, Jan. 13, 2025, from 4 — 7 p.m., and Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2025,

from 10 a.m., until the time of service at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Bruce Rowlison Remembrance Fund. Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

SEE **OBITUARIES/PAGE A3**

DEATH NOTICES

Raymond E. Bryant, 92, of Bedford, KY, died Monday, Jan. 6, 2025. Funeral service is at noon on Thursday, Jan. 16, at Heady-Radcliffe Funeral Home & Cremation Services in La Grange, KY, with a committal service to follow at Louisville Memorial Gardens East in Louisville.

Larry William Burdine

Jr., 52, of Deputy, IN, died Monday, Jan. 6, 2025, at Norton Brownsboro Hospital in Louisville. Funeral service will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18, at the Dove-Sharp & Rudicel Funeral Home and Cremation Service in North Vernon, IN, www.dovesharprudicel.com.

Erma Jean Callis, 92, of Clarksville, IN, died Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at Westminster

Health Care Center in Clarksville. Arrangements will be announced by Ransdell Funeral Home in Bedford, KY, www.ransdellfuneral.com.


Mary E. Wiley Carr, 93, of Martinsville, IN, and formerly of Vevay, IN, died Friday, Jan. 3, at IU Health Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. Graveside services will be conducted in the Spring in the Vevay Cemetery in Vevay, IN. Arrangements by Haskell & Morrison Funeral Home in Vevay, www.haskellandmorrison.com.

Mona L. Schanding Crabtree, 68, of Vanceburg, KY, and

formerly of Vevay, IN, and Madison, IN, died Monday, Jan. 6, 2025, at Hospice of Hope Care Center in Maysville, KY. A celebration of life will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18, at Haskell & Morrison Funeral Home in Vevay, www.haskellandmorrison.com.

Curtis Crutcher, 70, of Berea, KY, and formerly of Carrollton, KY, died Monday, Jan. 6, 2025, in Berea. Arrangements will be announced by Tandy-Eckler-Riley Funeral Home in Carrollton, www.tandyecklerrileyfuneralhome.com.

SEE **DEATH/PAGE A3**



THE MADISON COURIER

(USPS 325000)
FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025

Published 2 days each week on Tuesday and Friday.

Periodical postage paid at Madison, IN and additional mailing offices.
Please send address changes to
The Madison Courier, 310 West St., Madison, IN 47250
812-265-3641

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
\$60 a year • \$35 for six months
\$20 for three months • \$8 for one month

NON-LOCAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES
\$90 a year • \$52.50 for six months
\$30 for three months • \$12 for one month

OFFICE HOURS
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

NEWS DEPARTMENT
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday

CLASSIFIED-ADVERTISING
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES
2:30 p.m. Friday for Tuesday issue
Noon Monday for Thursday issue
Noon Thursday for Saturday issue

VOL. 225 • ISSUE NO. 3

BIRTHDAYS

Editor’s Note: Got a birthday or anniversary coming up? Send name, date and number of years (optional) to zelda@madisoncourier.com or call 812-265-3641. Please leave your name and phone number in case we have followup questions.

JANUARY 10
Larami King

JANUARY 12
David Brent

JANUARY 14
Dave Taylor

JANUARY 15
Linda Barbeau
Rhonda Sauley
Kenny Surret

JANUARY 16
Share Boles
Wayne Engle
Sara Minor
Charlie Wade

JANUARY 17
Lisa Crutchfield

JANUARY 18
Kim Nyberg
Tiffini Poling
Zane Williams

WEATHER

Sunrise: 7:57 a.m.
Sunset: 5:40 p.m.
Temperature: High 29, Low 2, Mean 15.5, Deficit 14.7
Precipitation since last published: 1.58 (snow/ice)
Precipitation, January 2025: 2.01
Precipitation, 2025: 2.01
Barometer: 30.07, Rising
River Level at Clifty Creek: 425.83, Rising
Forecast: Saturday: Cloudy High 29/Low 21; Sunday: Partly cloudy High 35/Low 30; Monday: Cloudy High 32/Low 15; Tuesday: Partly cloudy High 25/Low 10.

LOTTERY

INDIANA
Hoosier Lotto: 7-19-34-36-38-44 (1/8). Next Estimated Jackpot: \$37.2 million. Next Drawing (1/11).
Cash Five: 6-21-27-37-41 (1/8)
Cash 4 Life: 3-4-10-36-56 CB: 4 (1/8)

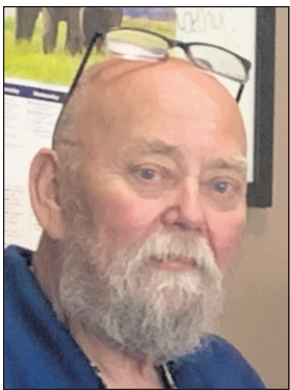
KENTUCKY
Cash Ball: 3-4-15-34 CB 24 (1/8)
Lucky For Life: 13-14-24-37-38 LB:

13 (1/8)
MEGAMILLIONS: 20-24-33-39-48 MB: 18, MP 2 (1/7). Next Jackpot: \$77 million. Next Drawing (1/10)
POWERBALL: 1-20-36-38-43 PB: 24, PP 2 (1/8). Next Estimated Jackpot: \$263 million. Next Drawing (1/11)
POWERBALL DOUBLE PLAY: 22-29-36-61-65 PB: 17 (1/8). Next Estimated Jackpot: Up to \$10 million. Next Drawing (1/11)

OBITUARIES

Martin Douglas ‘Doug’ Shuler

Martin Douglas “Doug” Shuler, age 68, of Vevay, IN, at Sandy Beach near Brooksbury entered this life on Dec. 14, 1956, in Indianapolis, IN, at Methodist Hospital. He was the loving son of Wayne Franklin “Bud” and Eileen Mary Brouse Shuler. He was raised in Indianapolis and Vevay, IN, and graduated in 1976, from Switzerland County High School. On Dec. 16, 1978, he was united in marriage to Karen Leigh Barnes at his parents home in Vevay, IN. This happy union of 46 years was blessed with two daughters, Heather and Holly. He last worked for Archer Services as a group home care-giver for four years. He previously worked at U.S. Filter in Madison for 10 years and for 15 years with Dow Corning. He also had worked with East and West Brook contractors with Dow Corning. For 15 years he operated a construction company known as D & S Construction and enjoyed being a carpenter. Doug truly enjoyed life either by camping, fishing, hunting, making crafts, making jewelry, collecting arrowheads, off roading, motorcycles, and boating. He was an awesome cook and loved to cook for anyone. Family was always first and he loved his friends. He enjoyed fellowship in the motorcycle club; was raised catholic but was now a faithful member of the Brooksbury Baptist Church. He and Karen enjoyed their home at Sandy Beach for the past 43 years where family, and friends, were always welcome. Doug was a personality larger than life in presence and spirit. He will be greatly missed in his family and community. Doug died on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at 2:18 p.m., at the Norton Brownsboro Hospital in Louisville, KY. Doug will be missed by his loving wife of 46 years, Karen Leigh Barnes Shuler of Vevay, IN; his loving daughters, Heather Brooks and her husband, Derek of Brooksbury, IN, Holly Shuler of Brooksbury, IN; his adoring grandchildren, Kodie, Trinidie, Autumn, and Makinzie; his sisters, Kathy Hershey and her husband, John of



Westfield, IN, Donna Lennox Hobson and her husband, Kenneth of Zionsville, IN, Yonna Heath and her husband, Jeff of Brooksbury, IN, Yolanda Jo Simmons of Madison, IN, Yvonna “Yo Yo” Tilley and her husband, Andy of Madison, IN; his sisters in law, Pam Barnes of Dupont, IN, and Mary “Cricket” Shuler of Bon Aqua, TN; his brother in law, Jerry Barnes and his wife, Pat of Madison, IN; his aunts, Wauneta Deveary of Madison, IN, and Mary Parker and her husband, Gary of Sarasota, FL; several nieces, nephews, and other relatives. He was preceded in death by his father, Wayne Franklin “Bud” Shuler; his mother, Eileen Mary Brouse Shuler; his brother, Anthony David “Tony” Shuler; his brothers in law, James Lennox, Kurt Douglas Barnes, and Kenneth Wayne Barnes; his father in law and his mother in law, William Lamar Barnes, and Beatrice Mae Koivu Barnes. Funeral services will be conducted Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025, at 1 p.m., by Pastor John Hart, Pastor Mark Lee and Pastor Jeff Douglas at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive Madison, IN. Friends may visit Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025, from 10 a.m. — 1 p.m., at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Memorial contributions may be made to the Brooksbury Baptist Church. Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

Kathryn ‘Kathy’ or ‘Katty’ Frances Davis O’Neal

Kathryn “Kathy” or “Katty” Frances Davis O’Neal, age 94, of Madison, IN, entered this life on March 21, 1930, in Madison, IN. She was the loving daughter of the late James Herbert and Cecelia Mae Brown Davis. Kathy died on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, at 12:30 p.m., at her home in downtown Madison, IN. Kathy will be missed by her loving sons, Garry O’Neal and his wife Patti of Mc Cordsville, IN, Gregory O’Neal and his wife Cindy of Floyds Knobs, IN, Brent O’Neal and his wife Anita of Madison, IN; her grandchildren, David O’Neal (Brittani), Brandon O’Neal (Jillian), Lauren O’Neal, Gavin O’Neal (Courtney), Krista O’Neal Molina (Alex), Katie O’Neal King (Shaun), her great grandchildren: Jaksyn, Julian, Lucy, Nash, Ruby, Keeley, Kami, Benjamin, Sophia, Jameson, and Lennox; her brothers in law, Ralph Storm of Madison, IN, and Gene O’Neal of Oceanside, CA; several nieces, nephews, and other relatives. She was preceded in death by her father, James Herbert Davis, her mother, Cecelia

Mae Brown Davis, her beloved husband of 46 years, David Weldon O’Neal, died July 9, 1993, her brothers, Herbert Davis, Ralph W. Davis, Sr., her sisters, Helen Gourley, Betty Anderson, Delores Storm, Wanda Lakeman, and her grandson, Cameron Pate O’Neal. Funeral services will be conducted on Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025 , at 1 p.m., by Rev. Dr. Kevin Crouch at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive Madison, IN. Interment will follow in the Springdale Cemetery, 600 Fifth Street in downtown Madison, IN. Friends may visit Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025 from 4 — 7 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025, from 12 p.m., until the time of service at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Memorial contributions may be made to the Ryker’s Ridge Baptist Church. Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

Connie Sue (Dibble) Leininger

Connie Sue (Dibble) Leininger, of Dewey, AZ, died on Sunday, Dec. 22, 2024, at the age of 64. She the daughter of Edward and Elizabeth Katherine “Kathy” Dibble, of Madison. Connie was a sacrificial, giving, and loving woman, who gave her whole life to her family, especially her three children who survive her, Timothy, of Meriden, CT, Jennifer, of New Albany, and Jonathan, of Prescott Valley, AZ. She is also survived by her sister Phyllis and brother Michael, three grandsons and two granddaughters, three nephews and one niece.



She always had a strong faith in God her favorite verse was Philippians 4:13. A former resident of Madison, a memorial service will be held in her honor at First Christian Church in Hanover, on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025, at 2 p.m.

Mary Irene Amos

Mary Irene Amos, age 73, of North Vernon, IN, the daughter of the late Wendell and Gertrude (Oxley) Bennett, was born on April 18, 1951, at their home in Vevay, IN. Mary passed away on Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024, at the Norton Women’s and Children’s Hospital in Louisville, KY. Her life will be cherished by her daughters: Angela Elswick and her husband, James “Jay” of North Vernon, IN, and Pamela Boone, of Indianapolis, IN; her granddaughters: Shea Mays and her husband, Chad, and Maranda Ater and her husband, Jordan; her sisters: Rose Wilcutts and Deanie Scudder, both of Centerville, TN; her brother: Harry Bennett of Seffner, FL; and numerous nieces,

nephews, and cousins. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her aunt: Clementine Dykes; and nine of her siblings. A Celebration of Life will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025, at Lytle Welty Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Vail Chapel, on Madison’s hilltop. Friends and family may gather at the Lytle Welty Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Vail Chapel from 12 p.m., until the time of the service on Saturday. The family requests memorial contributions be made to the Norton King’s Daughters’ Cancer Center, the Brooksbury Baptist Church, or the Tea Creek Baptist Church. Contributions may be made at the Lytle Welty Funeral Home or at lytlewelty.com.

Deborah K. ‘Debbie’ Meadows Singer

Deborah K. “Debbie” Meadows Singer, age 73, of Madison, IN, entered this life on Sept. 13, 1951, in Madison, IN. She was the loving daughter of the late Frank J. and Zeda Marie Bladen Meadows. She graduated from Madison Consolidated High School in 1969, and married the love of her life, George Singer, on Nov. 1, of that same year. Together, they would build a beautiful life centered around family and love. A beloved mother, grandmother, and great grandmother, Debbie will be remembered for her warm heart, fun loving spirit, and the simple joys she brought to those around her. She retired after 20 years of service with Labcorp in Columbus, GA. She loved reading, playing Scrabble, and spending time with her family. Since recently returning to Madison, IN, she found happiness reconnecting with old friends and enjoying the local music scene. Debbie’s memory will live on in the hearts of all who knew her. May her life serve as a reminder of the importance of love, laughter, and family bonds that endure across generations. Debbie entered into eternal rest on Monday, Dec. 30, 2024, at 7:44 a.m. at the Norton Brownsboro Hospital in Louisville, KY. Debbie will be missed by her loving husband of 55 years, George C. Singer of Madison, IN; She was a devoted mother to Micki Rittwage and her husband, Pete of Martinez, GA, Heather Zeunges and her husband, Chad

of Murphreesboro, TN; her legacy will continue through her five grandsons, James Rittwage and his wife, Lizzy, Tron Rittwage and his wife, Makayla, Ryker Singer, Sam Rittwage, and Carson Zeunges; her great granddaughter, Sage Rittwage; she was the cherished eldest sibling to Tom Meadows and his wife, Bonnie of Madison, IN, Mell Clark of Fair Hope, AL, Mark Meadows of Madison, IN, Scott Meadows of Charleston, SC; her step mother, Charlotte Meadows of Hanover, IN; numerous nieces, nephews, and other relatives. She was preceded in death by her father, Frank J. Meadows, and her mother, Zeda Marie Bladen Meadows. Memorial services will be conducted Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, at 1 p.m., by Pastor Roger Dean at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Private inurnment will follow in the Fairmount Cemetery Columbarium in Madison, IN. Friends may visit Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, from 11 a.m. — 1 p.m., at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, 325 Demaree Drive in Madison, IN. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army or any Hospice agency. Cards are available at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison, and Hanover. Online condolences, remembrances, and memorials, can be left at www.morgan-nay.com.

DEATH

FROM **PAGE A2**

David Edwards, 74, of Madison, IN, died Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, at the Hosparus Inpatient Unit of Norton Pavilion in Louisville. Cremation was chosen with no services. Arrangements by Morgan & Nay Funeral Centres of Madison and Hanover, IN, www.morgan-nay.com. **Robert Edward Gotts, 97,** of Madison, IN, died Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, at his residence. Arrangements will be announced by Lytle Welty Funeral Home & Cremation Services in Madison, www.lytlewelty.com.

FLAME

FROM **PAGE A2**

powerful Santa Ana winds, the flames obliterated more than 1,000 structures, scorched landmarks made famous by Hollywood and killed at least five people. One of the fires was the most destructive in the modern history of the city of LA. The escapes were perhaps the most harrowing that Los Angeles has ever seen. People abandoned their cars and fled on foot as tree limbs crashed down and howling winds sent flames flying in every direction. Others flagged down rides from friends or strangers. With so many cars abandoned in the middle of Sunset Boulevard in Pacific Palisades, authorities had a bulldozer push the vehicles out of the way to clear a path for emergency vehicles.

“Don’t Go Broke In A Nursing Home”[®] COME TO ONE OF OUR FREE WORKSHOPS



Tuesday, January 14th at 1 PM
Fairfield Inn & Suites
Madison
108 Saint Michaels Avenue
Madison, IN 47250

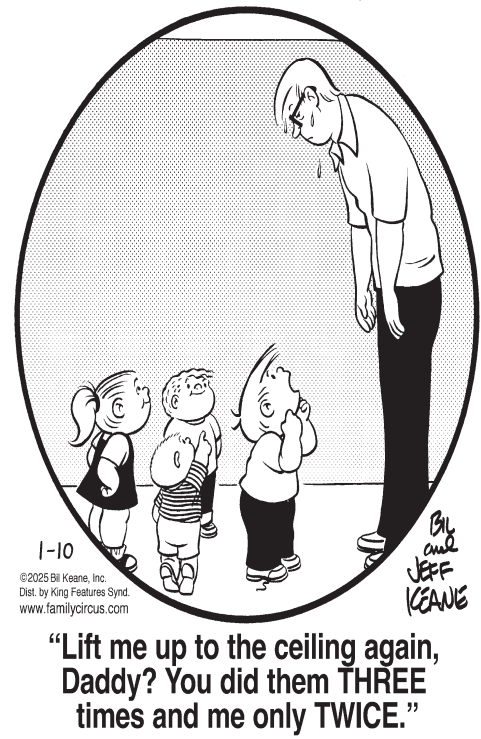
800.763.7930
elderadvisers.com

Elder Advisers[®]
“Protecting Assets & Providing Peace of Mind”

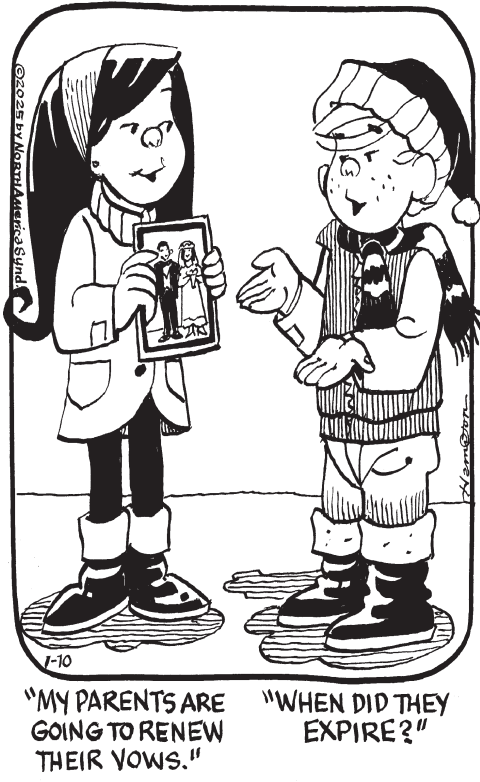
Elder Advisers is not a law firm or a substitute for an attorney. We merely advise on financial matters and make introductions to attorneys for legal matters.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



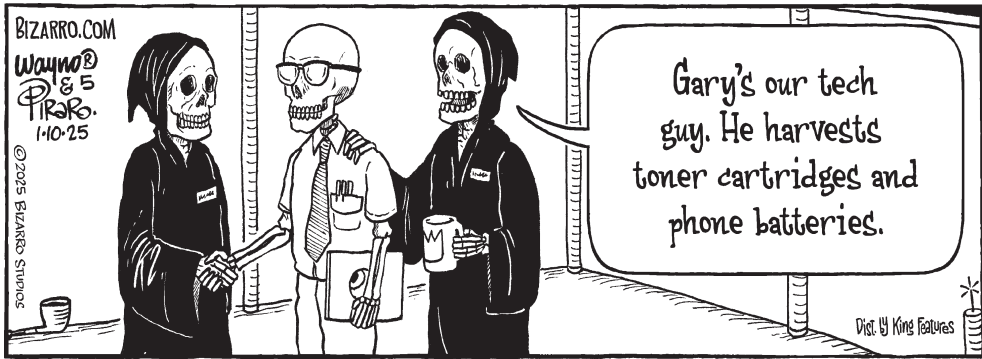
DENNIS THE MENACE



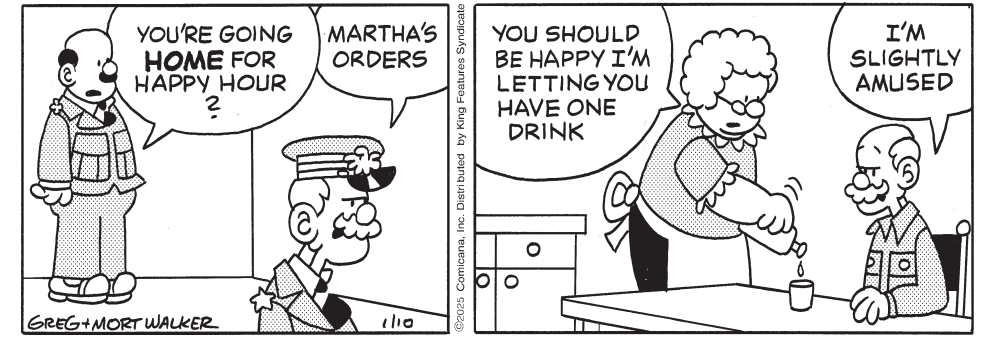
ARCTIC CIRCLE



BIZARRO



BEETLE BAILEY



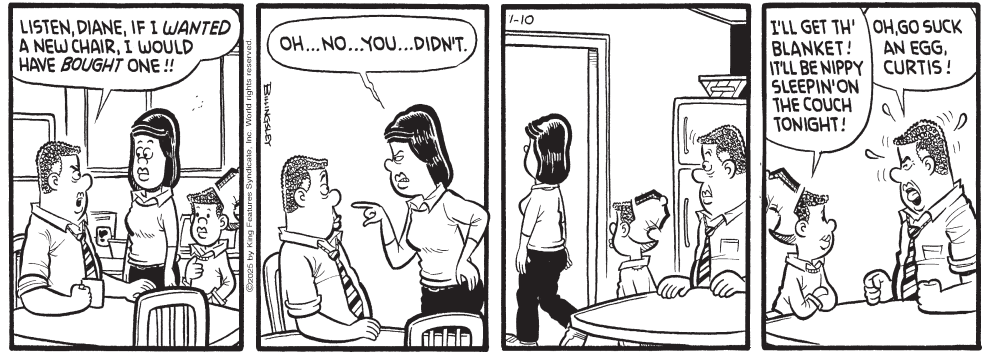
RHYMES WITH ORANGE



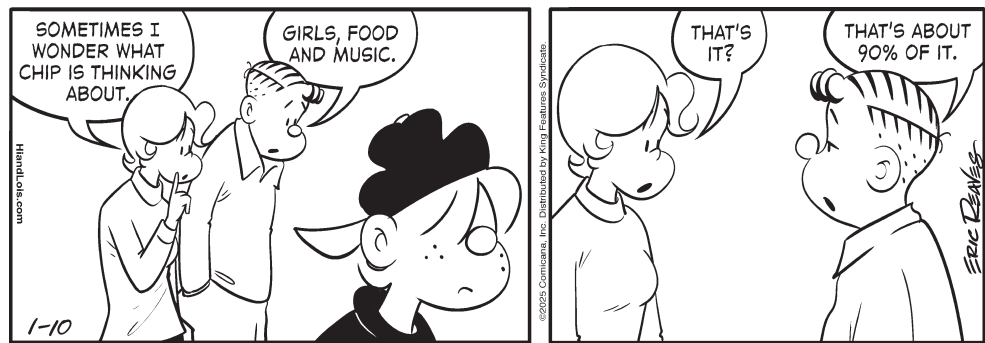
BLONDIE



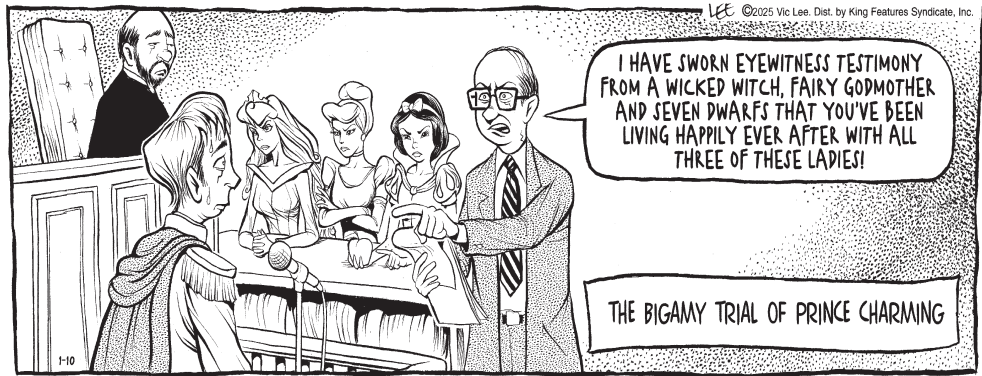
CURTIS



HI & LOIS



PARDON MY PLANET



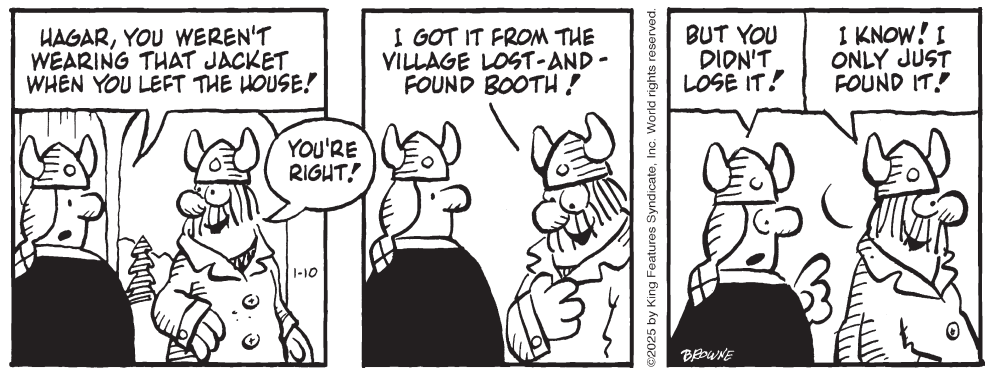
ZITS



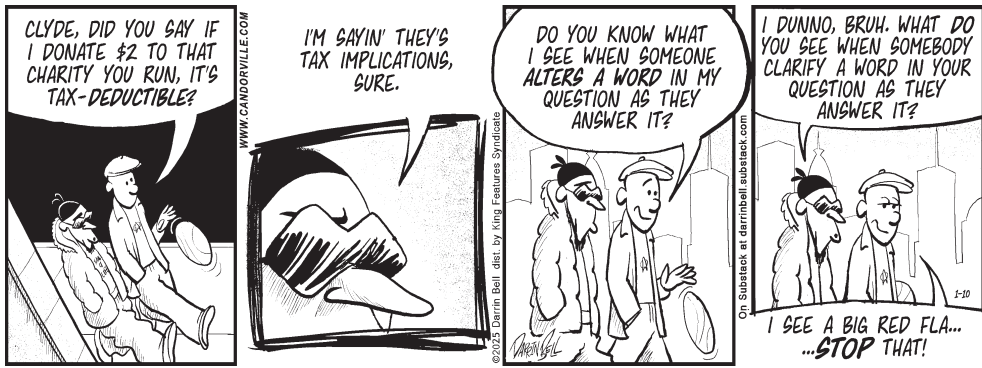
DUMPLINGS



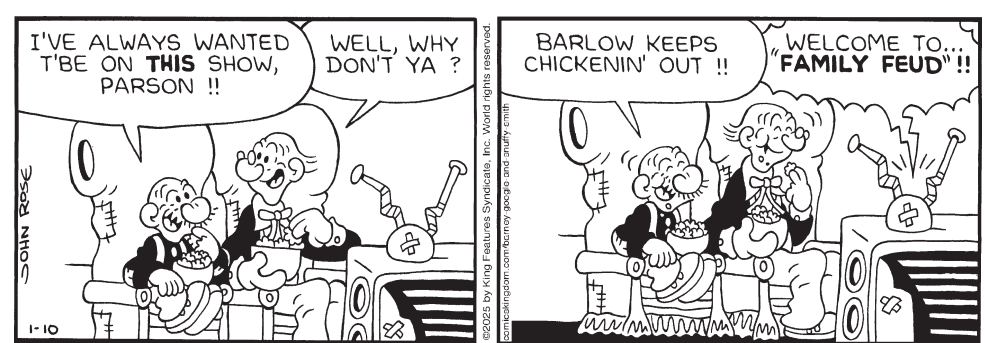
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CANDORVILLE



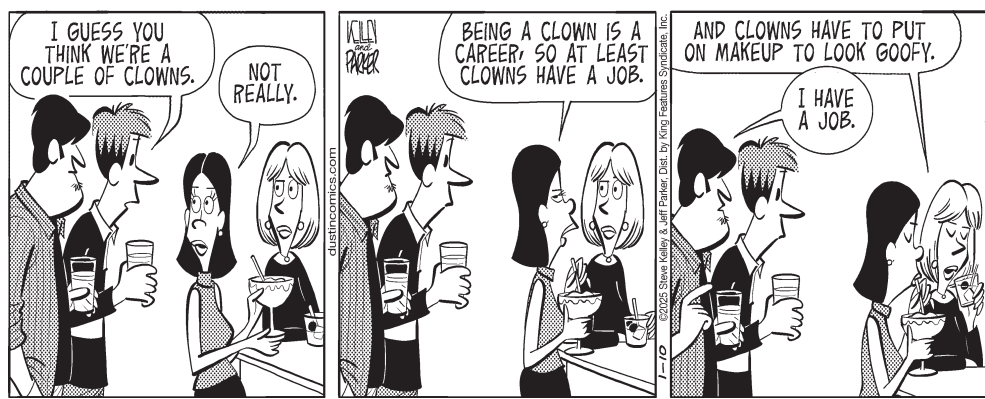
BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH



SALLY FORTH



DUSTIN



MUTTS



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

1-11

©2025 Bil Keane, Inc.
Dist. by King Features Synd.
www.familycircus.com

BIL AND JEFF KEANE

"Let's race!"

DENNIS THE MENACE

1-11

©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc. Distributed by King Features Syndicate

"WHY DID WE DIG OUT THE CAR IF THE STUPID THING WON'T START?"

ARCTIC CIRCLE

1-11

©2025 Arctic Circle, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

BIZARRO

Waymond P.E.S. TIRRO 1-11-25

JACK-AND-JILL-IN-THE-BOX

Dist. by King Features Syndicate
BIZARRO.COM
©2025 BIZARRO SYNDICATE

BEETLE BAILEY

123

123

GREG & MORT WALKER 1-11

©2025 Beetle Bailey, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

RHYMES WITH ORANGE

THE DISCOVERY

What does ??? mean?

CHECK OUT THE HIEROGLYPHS ON THIS LAUNDRY CARE TAG.

©2025 Rhymes With Orange, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

BLONDIE

1-11

©2025 Blondie, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

CURTIS

1-11

©2025 Curtis, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

HI & LOIS

1-11

©2025 Hi & Lois, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

PARDON MY PLANET

1-11

©2025 Pardon My Planet, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

ZITS

1-11

©2025 Zits, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

DUMPLINGS

1-11

©2025 Dumplings, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

1-11

©2025 Hagar The Horrible, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

CANDORVILLE

1-11

©2025 Candorville, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH

1-11

©2025 Barney Google and Snuffy Smith, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

SALLY FORTH

1-11

©2025 Sally Forth, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

DUSTIN

1-11

©2025 Dustin, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

MUTTS

Ms. Lolo PET PSYCHIC

HE WANTS TO BE CALLED "KING"

mutts.com

©2025 Mutts, Inc. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

Hanover to seek CCMG funding for several town streets

BY BOB DEMAREE

With a call for projects now open for Indiana’s Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) Program, the town of Hanover is working on an application to provide funding for maintenance on some of its streets.

The Hanover Town Council on Tuesday approved funding up to \$5,000 for Midwestern Engineers to prepare the application that must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Jan. 31.

Hanover Superintendent of Streets and Utilities Scott Williams said the application will request funding for crack filling and seal coating on Main Street, Madison Avenue, Main Cross Street, Thornton Road and East Kuntz Road.

“It just started where Community Crossings will pay to preserve the road,” said Williams, noting that taking action to ensure that roads last longer is worth the effort and expense. “When the roads get cracks in them

and water seeps down in them, then the ground freezes, it pushes the road up. We’re just trying to prevent that.”

Since Hanover’s population is 3,743 (according to the 2020 Census), the town meets Community Crossings criteria for cities and towns with population under 10,000, requiring just a 25% match for the grant.

Williams said he’s not certain that the work will cost, but that Midwestern Engineers will calculate that in preparing the grant application.

The grant application will also seek funding for better striping and new crosswalks on Main Cross Street, which passes in front Southwestern Schools.

Williams said the new crosswalks were recently painted by the town but he would like them done professionally. “I did the ones that are there now. They work for now, but if we’re going to do this, let’s let the guys who do that for a living, and use

good paint to last three or four years instead of six months like the stuff I got,” he said.

The town council also approved the purchase and installation of new plow for \$9,309 from J Edinger & Son that will go on the town’s new dump truck.

Council Vice President Treva Shelton commended the work of Williams and the streets team in clearing Hanover’s streets during this week’s snowstorm. “I want to compliment you on how the streets of Hanover look,” she said. “You’ve done a good job.”

In other business:

- Town council officers for 2025 were elected, staying the same as last two years with Debbie Kroger as president and Shelton vice president.
- Approved up to \$1,500 for Jacobi Toombs & Lanz Engineers to review and update various town building and zoning forms. “This is to bring us up to code,” Shelton said.

Hanover considering parking needs after growth in parks programs

BY BOB DEMAREE

Growth at Hanover Parks and its programs over the last four years has led to consideration that additional parking is needed at Hanover Community Park.

Concerns over the condition of the parking lot at Hanover Community Center, 200 Spruce Lane, were discussed at Tuesday’s meeting of the Hanover Parks Board.

Town Council President Debbie Kroger said the parking lot “is getting pretty bad” and wondered if it was time to resurface the pavement. “I just know it’s starting to get cracks and I don’t want someone to fall,” she said.

Town Council Vice President Treva Shelton suggested delaying a resurfacing because the town’s 5-year master plan includes adding more parking. “I would patch it,” she said, until decisions can be made on how to provide additional parking for the park.

Recently, the town addressed some of its parking issues by adding

a new 40-foot by 145-foot parking area off the north side of the park. Although that has helped, there continues to be concerns about having enough parking spaces when park activities are most busy.

“I don’t foresee us cutting back on the number of people that use the park,” said Parks Director Scott Davidson. “I think that’s going to continue to grow.”

During the meeting, Davidson presented data on park growth in the past four years since Hanover relaunched its parks program in 2021 after being dormant several years.

In 2024, there were 547 youth in the Hanover baseball/softball programs with 49 teams, growing from 498 youth and 42 teams in 2023, 340 youth and 31 teams in 2022 and 300 youth and 31 teams in 2021.

Hanover’s soccer program, a partnership with the Jefferson County Soccer Association, served 90 youth on nine teams in 2024, 80 youth with nine teams in 2023, 75 youth with 10 teams in 2022, and

70 youth with eight teams in 2021.

During the last two years, Hanover has offered a midsummer baseball/softball program. In 2024, there were 180 youth and 19 teams. In 2023, there were 140 youth and 14 teams.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

- Davidson reported there are 30 youth and five teams in the Hanover Parks Department girls basketball program for Kindergarten through sixth grade. The program rund through January, then on Feb. 3 there will be skills and drills basketball program led by Jeff Garvey.
- Davidson said a total of \$3,650 was raised through the parks department’s Christmas Angels program for sponsorships that paid for Hanover’s Christmas activities during December including a bike giveaway, stocking giveaway, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, the fourth annual Christmas craft fair and the inaugural Reindeer Games.

Council votes on zoning amendments, hears snow, trash reports

Krebs reelected council pro-tem

BY MARK CAMPBELL

Madison City Council followed the recommendation of the city’s Plan Commission and rejected a zoning amendment that would have reclassified 2317 Lanier Drive from General Business to Medium Density Residential.

Action on zoning amendments, election of the council’s officers and council reappointments were the only action in an otherwise brief first meeting of the year.

The zoning amendment had come before the council for a first reading last month — with an unfavorable recommendation by the Plan Commission —

because there were zoning issues, ownership issues, and code enforcement issues with the property.

Property zoned General Business cannot serve as a residence and upon further discussion on Tuesday it was determined that the applicant, Jonathan Thompson, actually does not yet own the property but has been promised ownership from a family member if he can utilize the site for a home. Furthermore, Thompson had not properly notified adjoining property owners of his proposed changes.

Council members discussed the proposal at length on Wednesday and agreed there were too many problems with the application for approval and followed the recom-

mendation of the Plan Commission by voting 7-0 to reject the amendment. However, several of the members also expressed concern for the applicant and his efforts to find affordable housing and Council member Joel Storm was actually meeting with the applicant after the meeting adjourned.

In other zoning amendments, the council approved amending the city’s zoning map to rezone a former dentist office and residence at 130 Miles Ridge Road from Low Density Residential to General Business for use as a dental office without residence.

The Council unanimously approved the application since the structure had previously served that purpose. Council member Pat-

rick Thevenow also noted that since there are other business properties adjoining the site, the change does not create issues related to “spot zoning.”

The Council’s other business was the reelection of Carla Krebs as president of the council and Jim Bartlett as the vice president. The Council also reappointed Nancy Burkhardt to the Board of Zoning Appeals and Bartlett to the PACE Committee.

Mayor Bob Court-

ney also gave a couple of reports on this week’s snowstorm and efforts to clear roads and a report on solid waste collection in 2024.

Courtney commended the efforts of the street department to deal with the heavy snowfall and noted much progress has been made and there is more work to do. He said as of Tuesday 260 man hours had been devoted to snow removal with trucks driving 2,051 miles just in the city and spreading 225

tons of salt.

He said some of those same staff members were back on their regular jobs Tuesday operating trash collection trucks. He noted the city in 2024 collected 11,083 tons of solid waste, a quarter of a million tons of recycling and 815 tons of compost.

In other reports, Courtney said the ground breaking for the Shoppes at Sunrise Crossing housing development will be at 11 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 27, at the hilltop site.

MUSIC

FROM PAGE A1

I caught up with Kindred board members Jane Vonderheide, Mark Rogers, Pam Brown and Scout Odom to get their take on the direction of the Society and what the future holds. “It all started with the RiverRoots Music Festival,” relates Jane, “probably about 20 years ago now. Then the music series grew out of that, maybe 10 years ago. We just want to keep it alive. It’s such a beloved genre of music, and Madison has a lot of die-hard fans.”

Mark Rogers continues, “It’s a type of music you don’t normally get to see and experience around Madison, so we think it’s important to preserve the diversity of styles.

We’re filling in the gaps for bands and musicians who might not otherwise get to play in the typical venues. And a chance for people to see something different and original.”

Scout Odom echoes Mark’s comments, “The Still Folkin’ Series is the perfect way to share the folk sound and keep the spirit of that music and the culture vibrant. I hope people come away from it feeling the connection to this area and its history through the music and the artists that share it with us.”

Pam Brown adds, “For me it’s quite simple and it’s personal. I just love folk music, in all its forms. I was involved in RiverRoots going all the way back to the early days, and this is just an extension of that love and commitment. If

you are going to be a true music town, like Madison definitely is, you have to represent all types of music.”

Jane Vonderheide chimes in, “The Kindred Folk Society is hustling, with lots of irons in the fire and a lot of work being done by our very small crew. In addition to the six-show music series, we are just now kicking off an eight week songwriting workshop called Anatomy of a Song, led by Robert Reynolds. We had 16 slots available in the class and it filled up almost instantly. So we will likely schedule more workshops in the future.”

“Oh and don’t forget our Play Music on the Porch event,” adds Mark. “It was a huge success this past year and we are already planning the next one. Last Saturday in August, if you want to mark your calendar. In fact, you may want to reserve a golf cart rental right now!”

HOT TIP OF THE WEEK

If you just picked one venue and decided to go there every evening to see live music, you’d have to choose Rivertown Grill this week. Starting Wednesday and running all the way through Sunday, you can catch somebody up on their intimate little bar stage, playing their hearts out for your enjoyment. We owe all this live music goodness to Joe Breeck, the owner and driving force behind “The Grill.” If you’d like to pat him on the back and tell him how much you appreciate it, Saturday night is your chance. It’s a special “Birthday Bash” for Joe at Rivertown, including what

is sure to be some inspired Karaoke singing!

As far as new things on the calendar this week, there’s a band at the American Legion on Friday and Tailgators on Saturday called the River Valley Sons that I don’t believe I’ve seen on the calendar before. And The Central is trying out a new band on Saturday called The Leftovers.

Charlie Rohlfing is a retired advertising man and partner in The Red Bicycle Hall music venue. Look for his distinctive fedora bobbing above the crowd, anywhere live local music is happening.

MUSIC EVENTS SCHEDULE

Friday, January 10

Red Bicycle Hall — Kindred Valley w/Tyler Dawson (8 p.m.)

Mad Paddle — John Baxter & the Bottom Feeders (7-9 p.m.)

Mad Paddle — Radioface w/ Joe & Deano (9:30-11 p.m.)

American Legion — River Valley Sons (8 p.m.-Midnight)

Rivertown Grill — Joe’s Birthday Bash w/ith L&L Karaoke (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

Tailgators — Deadeye Drifters (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

The Central — Justin Chappel w/Strange Brew (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

Saturday, January 11

Mad Paddle — Dylan West Band (7-11 p.m.)

The Moose — Joe & Deano (7:30-10:30 p.m.)

Rivertown Grill — Stoned Gnomes (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

Tailgators — River Valley Sons (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

The Central — The Leftovers (9 p.m.-1 a.m.)

Sunday, January 12

Rivertown Grill — Anthony Ray Wright (7-10 p.m.)

Preserve YOUR place in your community's history



Birth ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wedding
announcements

Engagement
announce-

Published FREE In Your Local Newspaper

Everything we publish becomes part of the historical record.

So preserve your most important life events in the newspaper, it’s free.

Submit your announcements at www.madisoncourier.com

Global warming fueling more frequent cold blasts

BY SETH BORENSTEIN
AP SCIENCE WRITER

Frigid air that normally stays trapped in the Arctic has escaped, plunging deep into the United States for an extended visit that is expected to provoke teeth-chattering but not be record-shattering.

It's a cold air outbreak that some experts say is happening more frequently, and paradoxically, because of a warming world. Such cold air blasts have become known as the polar vortex. It's a long-established weather term that's become mainstream as its technical meaning changed a bit on the way.

What it really means to average Americans in areas where the cold air comes: brrrrr.

What's happening is the jet stream — that usually west-to-east river of air way above ground that moves weather systems along — has made a roller-coaster like dip from the Pacific Northwest to the Southeast and is stuck on that wavy track.

To the west of that plunge, in California, it's hot and dry. But to the east and just above the dip, it's a taste of the North Pole.

"We're just getting a lot of cold Canadian and Arctic air that's being just channeled from north to south," said Dan DePodwin, AccuWeather director of forecast operations. "We really expect this to be more of a prolonged stretch of well below historical average temperatures. We're talking 12 to 25 degrees Fahrenheit (7 to 14 degrees Celsius) across a large portion of the eastern half of the country."

The worst will be in areas that just got hit with heavy snow, from Kansas to Washington, said National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center meteorologist Zack Taylor: "That's where we could see actual overnight lows down well into the single digits, perhaps even below zero in some places across the Ohio Valley and the Plains."

Judah Cohen, seasonal forecast director at the private firm

Atmospheric and Environmental Research, called this a polar vortex event. He and DePodwin called it a stretching of the polar vortex, which is cold air normally penned in high above the Arctic that's there year round.

"Think of it as like a rubber band at rest, kind of roundish," Cohen said. "If you start pulling on it, it gets elongated like a hot dog or like pulling on a rubber band. It gets stretched out."

When the polar vortex stretches it can either bring that cold air south to the United States or toward Asia, said Cohen, an expert in winter weather.

Other times, when something called sudden stratospheric warming happens, the polar vortex moves away from the Arctic and comes south or even splits. That's not the case this time, Cohen said.

Other meteorologists, including Yale Climate Connections' Jeff Masters, along with National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center meteorologist Laura Ciasto, who co-writes the agen-

cy's "polar vortex blog," say the polar vortex term is being misused. Technically, the polar vortex is 20 miles high in the stratosphere. And what's happening right now is down lower.

These type of polar vortex disruptions — stretching or moving entirely out of the North Pole — are happening more frequently, according to a study last month by Cohen, Woodwell Climate Research Center scientist Jennifer Francis and others.

"There's a climate change signal in that," Francis said.

The Arctic is warming four times faster than the rest of the world, which means the difference between temperatures up north and down south are shrinking, Francis said. Arctic sea ice is shrinking, especially near the Barents Sea in Scandinavia, which releases more heat into atmosphere. That means more energy bouncing off and warping or moving the polar vortex, Cohen said.

DePodwin, who was not part of the study, said that makes

sense because of these changes in the Arctic "the jet stream seems like in a warming world may be more amplified."

Yet winters globally are on average 1.1 degrees Fahrenheit (0.6 degrees Celsius) warmer than 25 years ago, according to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration data. There can be more more cold outbreaks and warmer winters at the same time, DePodwin said.

"Keep in mind that this is a small part of the whole climate, a couple of weeks of weather in a small part of the Northern Hemisphere," DePodwin said, noting that climate change is years and decades across the globe. "Climate change does not mean that we will expect to see no more cold weather. It just means that the average temperature overall is going up and we still expect to see colder shots."

Read more of AP's climate coverage at <http://www.apnews.com/climate-and-environment>

SNOW

FROM **PAGE A1**

Switzerland County downgraded on Wednesday afternoon. "Most of the main county roads have been pretty much cleared," said Switzerland County Emergency Management Director Tom Moore, who noted highway crews were now working on secondary roads. Moore was hesitant to say if Switzerland County might be downgraded further due to the new weather system forecast for Friday. "We might turn around and go back up" to a warning depending on "what snow we'll have Friday. I have no idea."

In Indiana, the Warning/Red Travel status is the highest local travel advisory. The Watch/Orange Travel status means that conditions are threatening to the safety of the public with local travel advised only for essential trips such as to and from work or emergency situations. Advisory/Yellow is the lowest level of local travel advisory in Indiana which indicates individuals should use caution and avoid areas where travel is hazardous.

The city of Madison was the first to downgrade its status, that occurring Monday at 5 p.m. when Mayor Bob Courtney announced the city had gone to a Watch status. Jefferson County stayed at a Warning level until 8 a.m. Wednesday when True set Jefferson County to Watch status, stating the decision was made in collaboration with the Jefferson

County Commissioners, County Highway Superintendent Jason Copeland and the Sheriff's Department. "Winter Weather Emergency Conditions have improved enough to rescind the Travel Restriction Warning or Red Conditions and downgrade back to Watch or Orange Conditions," said True.

Courtney noted, "Our emergency action plan was in full force this week and the hard work of all involved is evident. I was in frequent communication with our EMA Director Matt True and all three of our County Commissioners regarding travel advisories. Jason Copeland and (City of Madison Director of Streets, Facilities and Solid Waste) Chris Hale worked tirelessly to lead their teams in clearing the primary roads.

"We worked collaboratively with our major employers as we navigated a return to work with the safety of employees a priority. All of this happened concurrently with our police and fire departments responding to 911 calls across the city and county," the mayor added. "We are still recovering from the severity of this storm and ask for everyone's patience as we continue our work and resume normal city services."

At Tuesday's Madison City Council meeting, Courtney said city employees had already devoted 260 man hours to snow removal with trucks driving 2,051 miles just in the city and spreading 225 tons of salt.

Trimble County went to a Level 2 status on Tuesday afternoon with Trim-

ble County Emergency Management Agency Director Andrew Stark stating road crews had made good progress and had "got a whole lot roads cleaned up. Obviously, there are a whole lot that need a lot of work. All the major county roads have been hit, and now they're working on side roads that don't connect to anything or one or two houses."

Carroll County went to a Level 1 snow emergency on Tuesday afternoon that advises caution. Carroll County Emergency Management Director Tony Crutcher said Tuesday afternoon, "Road conditions are really improving for us. Interstate 71 is looking really good. The state has worked hard and is really greatly improved. Our city and county roads are getting better. They're not normal and that's why we've reduced the snow emergency to Level 1 for that reason. There's still some hazardous road conditions. People need to be very aware of that."

True said high risks also remain in Jefferson County.

"There are 500 miles of road in the county, and a lot those are tree covered or hidden by hills or in the shade" where ice is slower to melt, he said. "The roads aren't fantastic right now but they are not near as treacherous as before ... Plan your trips and be wise, and combine things, or help a neighbor" in getting through the effects of the storm until warmer weather clears it away.

"It's going to take a lot of time for this ice to melt off. Even though the sun

were firefighters at the Deputy firehouse. "Getting there back to that lane, it was off the road a ways, it was extremely slick. We could get so far into the lane, and that was as far as we could get, then we had to stretch hoses the rest of the way."

Both Kent Volunteer Fire Department in Jefferson County and Johnson Township Fire Department in Scott County provided manpower and tanker assistance. Also, Norton King's Daughters' Health was on the scene along with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. Additionally, Jefferson County Highway Department assisted by spreading cinders on the roadway.

On Tuesday at 8:44 p.m., there was a report of smoke in a house at the 1200 block of Esplano Drive in Madison. "We pinned it down to an electrical outlet that failed," said Madison Township Fire Chief Robert Black. Even though there was nothing plugged in, it was shorting out. "The homeowner shut off the breaker to the house. It didn't burn the wall, and just stayed there in the electrical outlet."

Elsewhere, a trailer was destroyed Monday on the 13000 block of Henry Road, approximately 3.5 miles south of Deputy.

The fire was reported Monday at 1:11 p.m. and was fully engulfed when firefighters from the Deputy Volunteer Fire Company arrived on the scene and brought the blaze under control in about five minutes.

Deputy Fire Chief Mike Hazelwood said there was a trailer next to the one that burned but no one was home there. "It set back to the lane to the road so there wasn't any close neighbors, so apparently it had been burning a little bit before somebody saw it," he said.

Hazelwood said the other trailer and an out building that he characterized as a garage were nearby, and firefighters successfully worked to keep the fire from reaching those structures. "We kept it contained to that one trailer," which he does not think is occupied.

He said icy roads "slowed us up a little bit" responding to the call but "we had a quick response" because at the time the fire was reported there

comes out, the temperature hasn't gone above freezing. Water still freezes at 32 degrees," he said, citing even colder temperatures with Friday's weather system. "Cold is going to come with this ... just a few more days, and hopefully we'll be on the back side of this."

There have been challenges for the Jefferson County Highway Department, not only in doing the work to clear the roads, but the abuse the weather has had on highway equipment and trucks needing to be pulled out of ditches.

"Those guys are working their tails off," said True, commending both the county highway crews, and those in the city of Madison and town of Hanover. "I don't know how they could have done better because they are fighting conditions that they just can't beat."

Stepping Toward a Stress-Free Retirement



A Simple Guide to Rolling Your IRA or 401(k) into an Annuity

By Stephen Dybwad

Rolling your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or 401(k) into an annuity may sound complicated, but fear not – it may be straightforward and tax-free if done correctly. There are a couple of ways to do this: through a direct transfer or a qualifying withdrawal.

You're more of an observer than an active participant in a direct transfer. Your financial institutions take care of the transfer after you've signed off on the necessary paperwork. Simple, right?

A qualifying withdrawal, on the other hand, means you take control of your retirement funds (after the IRS potentially withholds 20%). You have 60 days to put that money into an annuity to avoid tax headaches. And don't worry; you'll get back any funds the IRS holds when tax season rolls around.

But why would you want to convert your IRA or 401(k) into an annuity in the first

place? An annuity may be part of your IRA, you simply change the investment vehicle. This can be done with no tax liability because it would still technically be an IRAS. If you withdraw funds from a qualified account, you must pay the tax liability. The remaining funds can then be deposited in a (n9n qualified) annuity and in doing so you remove the need for a Required Minimum Deposit.

You might be asking, "What's in it for me?"

Good question. There's a laundry list of potential benefits.

Firstly, one of the biggest concerns for retirees is income certainty. Stock markets can rise and fall unpredictably, but an annuity might offer you a steady, guaranteed income, taking the roller coaster ride out of your retirement planning. So, it might be an excellent way to kick back and enjoy retirement without keeping a nervous eye on Wall Street.

Secondly, there's this pesky thing called longevity risk – the risk of outliving your savings. The horror, right? But annuities come to the rescue here too. Your annuity payments may last as long as you do or even extend to your spouse's lifetime. This isn't something your typical stocks and bonds guarantee.

Thirdly, annuities might allow you to extend your tax deferral benefits if your funds are deposited in a non-qualified annuity. If you stick with traditional retirement accounts, there are mandatory minimum distributions you have to start taking at a certain age – which may mean more taxes.

And finally, annuities are customizable. You may structure them to cover you and your spouse or include certain riders like a death benefit or cost-of-living adjustment. It's all about finding what suits your needs.

But of course, annuities aren't for everyone, and it's important to understand the potential downsides too.

in "pretty good shape," although State Road 156 between Patriot and Markland was the exception and needs more work.

"We have not had any emergencies or severe traffic accidents," Moore said, noting there have been "a few EMS runs where the plows had to help them a little bit but it wasn't anything major. We've been lucky, I guess."

True thanked the public for their "patience and understanding."

"We don't get snow this significant very often," he said, adding that local highway crews "were ready and got all the things in place but unfortunately it takes more time to take care of a storm and roads in a storm of this magnitude than it does a much smaller one."

However, True said warmer days will be coming. "We'll get through it. This too will pass."

Consult a licensed and authorized financial professional before making any final decisions. They'll guide you through the rest of the process, and before you know it, you might be enjoying the peace of mind that comes with a guaranteed income stream, no market volatility, and the knowledge that you've got your retirement finances sorted. Happy retiring!

- Converting your IRA or 401(k) into an annuity may be straightforward and tax-free if done correctly. This strategy could provide benefits such as a guaranteed income stream, longevity risk mitigation, and customizable investment structures.

- While annuities may provide significant advantages, they also have potential downsides like complexity, and less liquidity. It's important to fully understand these before making a decision.

- If considering an annuity rollover, consult with a financial advisor to understand its implications for your unique situation, and shop around to find the best annuity plan from a strong insurance company. Your chosen annuity team should guide you through the rollover process.

Stephen Dybwad, a long time Hoosier resident, is a member of Syndicated Columnists, a national organization committed to a fully transparent approach to money management. Syndicated Columnists is the sole provider of this material, both written and conceptual, for this column. All rights reserved.

Kasper Insurance
220 Clifty Drive
Madison, IN 47250
Telephone 812-273-1187.
Stephen Dybwad
(retirevillage.com)

Michele Barlow is Shawe’s 2025 Golden Shamrock winner

BY THE COURIER STAFF
Michele Barlow has been named 2025 recipient of the annual Golden Shamrock Award by Prince of Peace Catholic Schools. The Golden Shamrock Award is the highest honor within Prince of Peace Catholic Schools. It is based on criteria such as long-term support of the schools, long-term community and volunteer service, positive image in the community, and much more.

Barlow, a 1967 Shawe Memorial High School graduate, served as teacher at Pope John Elementary School for 35 years, beginning in 1980. While at Pope John, Barlow taught every grade from first through sixth. She also was instrumental in the inception and creation of the first Pope John and Shawe Auction Dinner, the biggest fundraiser each year for

Prince of Peace Schools. After her retirement in 2015, Barlow continued to be an active part of Pope John Elementary and Shawe Memorial High School. Barlow is a past president of Prince of Peace Ladies Organization, the first female president of Boys and Girls Club of Jefferson County, served on the board of directors for Girls Inc. and the Women’s Giving Circle, and on the scholarship and Tour of Homes committees for Tri Kappa.

Some of Barlow’s achievements during her time as a teacher include coaching Math Bowl and Spell Bowl, and creating and leading a Book Club for advanced readers. In 2005, she was awarded the Mother Theodore Guerin Education Award. Since retirement, Barlow has tutored students during and

after school, served as a weekly volunteer in the Pope John cafeteria and helped several teachers in their classrooms. She also continues to attend most events at the schools, whether it is academic or athletic. Barlow will receive the Golden Shamrock Award on Thursday, Jan. 30, at a special ceremony after an 8:30 a.m. All-School Mass in the Shawe’s Rev. Hillary Meny Gymnasium to celebrate Catholic Schools Week.



Michelle Barlow

Surgeon General wants label warning of alcohol’s cancer risk

BY AMANDA SEITZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON — Alcohol is a leading cause of cancer, a risk that should be clearly labeled on drinks Americans consume, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy proposed on Friday. Murthy’s advisory comes as research and evidence mounts about the bad effects that alcohol has on human health, but his proposal for a label would require a rare approval from the U.S. Congress.

Americans should be better informed about the link between alcohol and cancer, in particular, Murthy argues in his advisory, noting alcohol consumption is to blame for nearly one million preventable cancer cases in the U.S. over the last decade. About 20,000 people die every year from those alcohol-related cancer cases, according to his advisory. Bottles of beer, wine and liquor already carry warning labels that say pregnant women should not drink and that alcohol consumption can impair someone’s ability to drive a car. But Murthy’s proposed label would go even further, raising awareness about the risk for cancer, too. “It’s pretty crazy that there’s a lot more information on a can of peas than on a bottle of whiskey,” said Dr. Timothy Naimi, who directs the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. “Consumers have the right to basic information about health



Jim Beam, Knob Creek and other alcohol bottles are pictured at a bar in Eagle, Colo., Dec. 25, 2018.

risks, serving size and drinks per container.” Consuming alcohol raises the risk of developing at least seven types of cancer diseases, including liver, breast and throat cancer, research has found. His advisory also notes that as a person’s alcohol consumption goes up, so does the risk for developing those illnesses. “For individuals, be aware that cancer risk increases as you drink more alcohol,” Murthy wrote Friday on the social media platform X. “As you consider whether or how much to drink, keep in mind that less is better when it comes to cancer risk.” Even with the Surgeon General’s advisory and new research that shows the dangers of drinking, it’s unlikely Congress would act swiftly to enact a new Surgeon General’s

warning on alcohol products. It’s been nearly four decades since Congress approved the first government warning label on alcohol, the one that says pregnant women shouldn’t drink and warns about the dangers of driving while drinking. No updates have been made since then. Before that, Congress approved a label on cigarettes cautioning users that smoking is hazardous to health, a move that is credited with helping America substantially reduce its bad habit. Any effort to add a cancer warning label to alcohol would face significant push back from a well-funded and powerful beverage industry, which spends nearly \$30 million every year lobbying Congress. Other research around alcohol, including reports that moderate drinking can

be associated with lower risks to of heart disease compared to no alcohol consumption, should be considered, said Amanda Berger of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States. “Many lifestyle choices carry potential risks, and it is the federal government’s role to determine any proposed changes to the warning statements based on the entire body of scientific research,” Berger said in a statement. The surgeon general’s advisory comes as the government is in the pro-



Surgeon General Vivek Murthy speaks during a panel discussion, Oct. 10, 2023, in New York.



Bottles of alcohol sit on shelves at a bar in Houston, June 23, 2020.

cess of updating dietary guidelines, including those around alcohol, that will form the cornerstone of federal food programs and policy. The updated guidelines are expected later this year.

The current guidelines recommend women have one drink or fewer per day while men should stick to two or fewer. Associated Press writer Carla K. Johnson contributed.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENTS
Madison Performing Arts Foundation Concert
Hanover College, Fitzgibbon Hall, Lynn Center for Fine Arts
Friday, Jan. 10, 7 p.m.
Hanover College music faculty members Jonathan Stanley, tenor, and Madlen Batchvarova, piano, will perform Divine Love, a survey of sacred songs and arias from J.S. Bach through Moses Hogan. Free.
Madison Performing Arts Foundation Concert
The Picker House, 110 St. Michaels Ave., Madison
Sunday, Jan. 12, 4 p.m.
Music faculty members William Herzog (violin) and Christina Seal (piano) from Northern Kentucky University will perform Gwentyth Walker’s Fantasy Etudes, Prokofiev’s Sonata 2, Biber’s Passacaglia and more.

GALLERY RECEPTION
The SPOT
326 Mulberry Street, Madison
Friday, Jan. 17, 5-8 p.m.
Reception for the paintings of Dallas Gambill and works by Brette McGlasson with talks about the art at 6 p.m. Two exhibits on display Jan. 5-30. Free.

POP-UP POETRY EVENT
House of Jane
207 East Main Street, Madison
Saturday, Jan. 18, 2-4:30 p.m.
Indiana Chitlin Circuit, a poetry reading in the round, featuring Indiana Poet Laureate Curtis L. Crisler with National Beat Poet Laureate Ron Whitehead, performing

with Bluesman Keith Scott and Madison Poet Jill Kelly Koren. Free.

FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS
Gleaners Mobile Food Pantry
National Guard Armory
1533 Clifty Drive, Madison
Monday, Jan. 13, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
(Postponed-Makeup TBA)
The Gleaners Mobile Food Pantry in Jefferson County is regularly held on the second Monday of each month and serves about 250 families locally with a drive through food distribution from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or when supplies run out. The pantry’s upcoming distributions will also be Mondays Feb. 10 and March 10 at the same times.
Salvation Army Food Bank
331 East Main St.
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays noon-1 p.m.
A food giveaway at the red door on east side of building. Bring your own bags. For more information, call 812-265-2157.

House of Hope Food Pantry
100 East 2nd St., Madison
Tuesdays 5-7 p.m.; Fridays 9-11 a.m.
A food giveaway and distribution at the Jefferson County House of Hope Food Pantry in downtown Madison. Please arrive at the pantry 15 minutes prior to closing to be served.

CLOTHING DISTRIBUTIONS
Jesus Clothes Closet
Trinity United Methodist Church

412 W. Main St., Madison
Mondays 9-11 a.m.
Jesus Clothes Closet distributes free clothing to those in need. For more information, call 812-866-4843.

SENIOR EVENTS
Hanover Senior Citizens Center
Exercising: The Hanover Senior Citizens Program is offering free exercising at the Hanover Park Community Center on Mondays and Thursdays at 10 a.m.
Lunch: The Hanover Senior Citizens Program is serving lunch at noon on Fridays at the Hanover Park Community Center.
Cost is \$5 and RSVP is required by calling 812-498-2894.

Madison Senior Citizens Center
Senior Meals: Lifeline Resources will be providing congregate meals at the Madison Senior Center, 208 West Main St. on Tuesday and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Meals are free for anyone over age 60 with a suggested donation of \$6.
Meals are \$6 for anyone under age 60.
Game Days: The Madison Senior Citizens Center hosts weekly card days and Bingo at the Senior Citizens Center in downtown Madison.
The schedule includes Euchre on Mondays and Thursdays from noon until 10 games are completed and Bingo on Tuesdays from 10-11:30 a.m.
The games are free and open to senior citizens.



Jump start the new year with a subscription to your local newspaper!

☐ Send me 12 months' of The Madison Courier for just \$45⁰⁰

Name

Address

City State Zip

Email

Phone Cell Phone

Credit Card # Exp. Date CVV

☐ Check Enclosed Check Number

All information and payment required to receive this special non-refundable offer. Offer only available to new subscribers in our local delivery area who have not had a subscription in the last 3 months. If you respond to this offer but do not qualify for introductory pricing, the expiration date will be prorated to match the payment to your current rate. Your subscription includes 24/7 digital access to all content available online. Your subscription expiration stop is automatic after a 28-day grace period. Yes, I authorize The Madison Courier to instruct my credit/debit card company to debit my credit/debit card account as I have requested above. Hurry! Offer expires Jan. 31, 2025.

2 WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE & SAVE!

CALL
812-265-3641

CLIP & MAIL
PO Box 1480
Owensboro, KY 42302

www.madisoncourier.com

Lifelong friends Welsh, Traylor to be teammates at Goshen

BY DAVID CAMPBELL
Barron Welsh and Adam Traylor swear they didn't do it on purpose. When the two lifelong friends and Southwestern High School baseball teammates were searching for a college, they did not plan on choosing the same place.
But call it fate or kismet, but there they were last week, holding a joint signing session as both inked their names to play baseball at Goshen College.
"It wasn't intentional at all. It just worked out that way," Welsh said with a laugh. "I had already gotten offered there and then Adam ended up going up there and, and it just worked out. It's was pretty exciting."
Welsh and Traylor have been playing baseball with each other nearly their entire lives — youth baseball, travel teams, Madison Junior High and then Southwestern. The pair have

been inseparable, but going to college together wasn't exactly the plan.
"I got in contact with them through (the recruiting app). We talked a little bit, I went on a visit, and then shortly after they, came out with an offer," Traylor said. "That was after Barron went, so that obviously helped my decision a little bit. It just sort of worked out that way. I mean, I'm happy it did."
Welsh and Traylor have been integral parts of a Southwestern team that has returned to prominence the past several seasons. Last year the Rebels won their first sectional championship since 1999 and Welsh and Traylor were major part of the team.
Southwestern coach Dan Thurston knows how much the pair mean to the Rebels, and the deep friendship they have with each other.
"They've been close friends their entire life and I'm very

excited that they get to have this opportunity," Thurston said.
Primarily a shortstop, Welsh batted .321 with 18 RBIs and 23 runs scored a year ago while Traylor went 5-1 on the mound with a 1.26 ERA and 36 strikeouts in 33 innings from the left side. He also hit .370 with 34 RBIs and 21 runs scored.
Goshen coach Brad Stoltzfus was thrilled to sign both players and loved the fact that they are lifelong friends.
"It's always cool to sign guys from the same school, especially a couple kids that have played together all their lives. We like those little connections," Stoltzfus said. "It doesn't always work out that way, but when there is a chance of that, and especially two guys that fill kind of some positional needs for us for next year, it's just great. We're excited to have them both."
Stoltzfus believes both players have what it takes to com-

pete at Goshen right away.
"We know these two will help us next year," the coach said. "When we sign guys, we don't usually label guys like, 'these are developmental kids.' We look at guys like they can help us right away."
"We're just kind of excited to be able to see them grow over the next five years, because we're really going to keep tabs on them this season," Stoltzfus added.

SEE GOSHEN/PAGE B2

Southwestern's Adam Traylor has signed to play baseball at Goshen College. Traylor, a left-hander, was 5-1 on the mound last year with a 1.26 ERA and 36 strikeouts in 33 innings and hit .370 with 34 RBIs and 21 runs scored.

David Campbell



HANOVER ROUNDUP

Transy pulls away in 4th to edge Hanover women

BY THE COURIER STAFF
Transylvania scored 25 points in the fourth quarter to pull away for a 73-65 win over Hanover in a first-place battle in women's HCAC basketball Wednesday at Collier Arena.
The two teams entered the game in a four-way tie atop the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference standings and traded the lead back and forth for three quarters with Hanover leading 21-13 after the first and 35-34 at halftime. The game was tied 48-48 heading into the fourth.
Transylvania, the defending Division III National Champion, opened the final quarter with 10-straight points to build a double-digit lead. Hanover closed to within five (66-61) on a jumper by Grace Bezold with 1:31 to play but the Pioneers pulled away from there to claim the win.
Bezold scored 20 points and had four rebounds to lead Hanover while Sammy Berman had 13 points and seven assists, Kady Clancy had 11 points, six rebounds and four assists and Katherine Benter had 10 points. Alexis Wines added nine points for the Panthers.
Riley Finn led four players in double figures for Transylvania (8-5, 5-1 HCAC) with 15 points. Sadie Wurth and Raegan Barrett each had 12 points and Chloe McKnight had 10.
Hanover, now 10-3 overall and 4-2 in the HCAC, hosts Earlham on Saturday and then travels to Rose-Hulman on Wednesday.

MEN FALL AT TRANSY
Hanover's losing streak in men's basketball reached five games with a 73-58 loss at Transylvania on Wednesday.
After starting the season 4-0, Hanover has since then lost seven of nine and trailed 40-28 at halftime Wednesday before playing nearly even with the Pioneers in the second half.

SEE HANOVER/PAGE B2



David Campbell

Hanover's Grace Bezold (1) goes up against Transylvania's Raegan Barrett during Wednesday's college basketball game at Collier Arena.

Ballo's 23 points help power Indiana past USC

Hoosiers off to best start since 2015-16

BLOOMINGTON — Oumar Ballo powered his way to 23 points and Indiana overcame an early double-digit deficit to beat USC 82-69 Wednesday.
The Hoosiers (13-3) earned their fourth win in five Big Ten Conference games, the program's best start since the 2015-16 season.

Playing for the first time at Bloomington, USC built a quick 10-point lead on a layup by Wesley Yates III eight minutes into the game, 19-9. Kanaan Carlyle knocked down a 3-pointer to get the Hoosiers within two, 24-22 with 6:18 left, and Myles Rice hit a pair at the line.
After Chibuzo Agbo's 3 put USC in front 27-24, Ballo grabbed a rebound, drew a foul and converted a pair of free throws, added two more from the line, a layup and a short jumper to help Indiana draw even at inter-

mission, 38-38.
Ballo dunks 90-seconds apart helped the Hoosiers to a 57-47 lead, and when the Trojans got within single digits down the stretch, Rice found the seven-footer for a layup and a three-point play to hold USC at bay.
Mackenzie Mgbako scored 20 points in Indiana's 77-71 win over Penn State but was 0-8 from the floor and did not score.
Rice converted 9 of 11 at the line and finished with 19 points, nine

rebounds and six assists. Luke Goode hit 4 of 5 from deep and finished with 16. Trey Galloway contributed 11 points and six assists. Ballo finished two rebounds shy of his third straight double-double.
Yates finished with 18 points to lead USC (9-6, 1-3). Desmond Claude added 15 points, five rebounds and four assists and Saint Thomas and Agbo each added 11 points.
Indiana plays at Iowa on Saturday (TV: Live on FOX at 8 p.m.) while USC plays at No. 13 Illinois.

LOCAL SPORTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY, JAN. 10

- BASKETBALL**
Switzerland Co. boys vs. Lawrenceburg, Rivertown Classic, 6 p.m.
Madison boys host Scottsburg, 7:30 p.m.
Shawe boys host Oldenburg, 7:30 p.m. (ppd.)
Southwestern boys at Rock Creek, 7:30 p.m.
Trimble Co. boys at Portland Christian, 7:30 p.m. (ppd.)
WRESTLING
Madison, Switzerland Co. girls, IHSAA Regionals at Mooresville, 11 a.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 11

- BASKETBALL**
Switzerland Co. boys & girls, Rivertown Classic, TBA
Hanover women hosts Earlham, 1 p.m.
Trimble Co. boys vs. Walton-Verona, All "A" Classic 8th Region Tournament at Owen Co., 1:30 p.m.
Carroll Co. boys at Bullitt Central, 2:30 p.m.
Hanover men host Earlham, 3 p.m.
Madison boys at Charlestown, 7:30 p.m.
Shawe boys hosts Assumption, 7:30 p.m.
Southwestern boys at Providence, 7:30 p.m.,
SWIMMING
Madison, Shawe, Switzerland Co., Madison Invite, 11 a.m.
WRESTLING
Southwestern boys at Providence, 8 a.m.
Madison boys, Shadday Invite, 9 a.m.
Switzerland Co. boys at Corydon, 9 a.m.

MONDAY, JAN. 13

- BASKETBALL**
Shawe girls host Crothersville, 6 p.m.
Carroll Co. boys at Gallatin Co., 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, JAN. 14

- BASKETBALL**
Trimble Co. girls at Henry Co., 6 p.m.
Carroll Co. girls at Gallatin Co., 7:30 p.m.
Madison girls host Silver Creek, 7:30 p.m.
Southwestern girls host Providence, 2:30 p.m.
Trimble Co. boys at Henry Co., 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING
Madison at Columbus East, 6 p.m.
Shawe, Southwestern at Silver Creek, 6 p.m.
WRESTLING
Southwestern boys host Switzerland Co., 6 p.m.

Georgia beats No. 6 UK for 1st top-10 win in 5 years

BY CHARLES ODUM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATHENS, Ga. — Freshman forward Asa Newell scored 12 of his 17 points after halftime and Georgia led the entire second half in beating No. 6 Kentucky 82-69 on Tuesday night for its first win over a top-10 team in five years.

Blue Cain added 15 points and Silas Demary Jr. had 14 for Georgia (13-2, 1-1 Southeastern Conference). Lamont Butler led Kentucky (12-3, 1-1) with 20.

Foul trouble hurt the Wildcats. Amari Williams went to the bench with four fouls early in the second half. Andrew Carr and Ansley Almonor picked up their fourth fouls later in the game.

Otega Oweh scored 12 points for Kentucky while shooting only 3 of 13 from the field.

TAKEAWAYS

Kentucky: After topping 100 points five times and averaging 90.2 points per game, the Wildcats trailed 47-34 at halftime.

Georgia: The Bulldogs' previous win over a top-10 team was a 65-62 victory over No. 9 Memphis on Jan. 4, 2020.

KEY MOMENT

Newell sank a 3-pointer from the top of the arc as the Bulldogs pushed their lead back to double digits at 64-54. The Wildcats had pulled to 55-50, but Newell's 3 helped Georgia regain momentum.



Brynn Anderson | Associated Press

Kentucky guard Lamont Butler (1) Georgia center Somto Cyril (6) and Georgia forward Asa Newell (14) dive for the ball Tuesday during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in Athens, Ga.

Following a turnover by Butler less than three minutes later, Demary sank another 3 for a 69-57 advantage.

KEY STAT

Georgia outscored Kentucky 29-15 at the free-throw line and Kentucky gave up double digit offensive rebounds for the second straight game — 15 in a win over Florida and 13 in the loss to Georgia. The Bulldogs had 38 free-throw attempts to Kentucky's 19, overcoming the Wildcats' 36-26 advantage in points in the paint.

"That's a bell we've got to ring,"

Kentucky coach Mark Pope said of rebounding. "It's a sign of distraction somehow. So many uncharacteristic plays for us. The second 10-minute stretch has been really problematic for us."

UP NEXT

With the SEC putting nine teams in the AP Top 25, the Bulldogs' difficult stretch of games against ranked conference opponents continues with a home game against No. 17 Oklahoma on Saturday. Kentucky visits No. 14 Mississippi State on Saturday (TV: Live on SEC at 8:30 p.m.).

No. 1 Bruins overpower Boilers with balanced scoring

BY MICHAEL MAROT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST LAFAYETTE — Lauren Betts finished with 17 points and seven rebounds in 22 minutes Tuesday night and Timea Gardiner added 16 points off the bench as the No. 1 UCLA Bruins never trailed in a 83-49 rout at Purdue.

Coach Cori Close gave her starters plenty of rest with Jones logging the most minutes, 25, in the Bruins' second game in four days in Indiana. UCLA pulled off a rare double by beating Purdue and Indiana on their home courts to remain a perfect 16-0 (5-0 Big Ten).

Destini Lombard scored 16 points to lead the Boilermakers (7-8, 0-4). Rashunda Jones and McKenna Layden each had eight points for Purdue.

But it was never really close.

UCLA scored the first 13 points and kept the Boilermakers at arm's length the rest of the night at a venue that features a statue of former Purdue All-American and UCLA men's basketball coach John Wooden and his Pyramid of Success.

TAKEAWAYS

UCLA: Close couldn't have scripted a better trip for her team. They beat the Hoosiers by double digits Saturday, attended an NBA game between the Indiana Pacers and Phoenix Suns on Saturday night, gave her starters a well-deserved break Tuesday night and even avoided getting caught in this week's snowstorm.

Purdue: Coach Katie Gearlds' rebuilding project is in Year 4, and it's hard to know how much progress she's made at her alma mater. The Boilermakers remain winless in

league play, with all four losses coming to Top 25 teams and four of their next five also against ranked foes.

KEY MOMENT

The Bruins jumped out to a 10-0 lead that forced Gearlds to burn her first timeout just 97 seconds into the game. It didn't help. Purdue trailed 29-15 after one quarter and never recovered from the early onslaught.

KEY STAT

UCLA outscored Purdue 40-12 in the paint, which explained the big discrepancy in the field goal percentages. The Bruins shot 53.2% compared with Purdue's 33.3%.

UP NEXT

UCLA returns home to play Northwestern on Sunday while Purdue hosts No. 25 Michigan on Saturday.

UConn guard Bueckers sprains left knee

BY JIM FULLER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

STORRS, Conn. — UConn guard Paige Bueckers has a left knee sprain, avoiding a serious injury.

She will miss Wednesday's game against Xavier.

Bueckers injured the knee in the third quarter of UConn's win over Villanova on Sunday. Coach Geno Auriemma said she may miss a few games.

"It is just a sprain," Auriemma said on Tuesday. "There is nothing torn, there is nothing crazy about it. Her knee got twisted a certain way, her ankle got twisted a certain way. It is just an awkward thing. We are hoping we have her back in a week."

Bueckers left the Huskies' 83-52 win over Villanova on Sunday after Villanova freshman guard Jasmine

Bascoe landed on the left leg of the UConn All-American as she dove on the floor for a loose ball. Bueckers limped off the court with 1:17 left in the third quarter and did not return.

Bueckers leads No. 7 UConn (13-2, 4-0 Big East) with an average of 19.9 points per game and is tied for the team lead with 29 3-pointers heading into Wednesday's home game against Xavier.

Bueckers was the national player of the year as a freshman. However, injuries limited her to just 17 games over the next two seasons. She has started the past 54 games over the past two seasons with Sunday's game at Villanova being the 100th of her collegiate career.

"When they have been through something in the past, it is a fear of

do I have to go through something again," Auriemma said. "That is the initial reaction. Once that is alleviated ... She is great. I spent a lot of time talking to her yesterday and today."

Auriemma said that reigning Big East Freshman of the Year Ashlynn Shade will move into the starting lineup while Bueckers is sidelined.

Shade started for UConn earlier in the season when guard Azzi Fudd was working her way back from a knee injury.

"I feel like Coach (Auriemma) did a good job of telling us to be ourselves," UConn senior guard Kaitlyn Chen said. "We all bring something different to the table so it is not like we are trying to replace her. Everyone just needs to bring a little bit more of what they are good at."

GOSHEN

FROM PAGE B1

Both players still have a year of high school left and each have high hopes for the upcoming season. While the Rebels graduated stalwarts Jamison Lewis, Will Stockdale and Peyton Cloud, most of the lineup is back.

What Thurston likes is that both players are natural leaders and their work ethics are off the charts.

"A lot of people don't remember but Barron struggled at the plate as a sophomore. We ended up DH'ing for him. He was a little down but he worked on it and came back and hit .321 last year," Thurston said. "And Adam is a natural leader. Sure, we had Jamison and Will last year, but Adam was just as vocal and sometimes it meant more coming from him. Those two guys will definitely lead us."



David Campbell

Southwestern's Barron Welsh has signed to play baseball at Goshen College. Welsh, primarily a shortstop, batted .321 with 18 RBIs and 23 runs scored last year.

Both Welsh and Traylor are looking forward to the upcoming season and each believes that the Rebels have what it takes to go even further than a year ago when eventual state champion Providence stopped their tourney run in the regional round.

"I don't think people realize how much we got. We definitely got a lot back," Welsh said. "I think we're going to be pretty

good this year."

"We lost Jameson and William, but I think we have a transfer coming in from Oldham County and then we have a couple young guys that are improving a lot, playing over the summer," Traylor said. "I think we are going to be just as successful this year and hopefully continue to win and maybe get a regional championship this year."

Hadley double-double leads Louisville over Clemson 74-64

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — J'Vonne Hadley scored a career-high 32 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, James Scott had his second career double-double and Louisville beat Clemson 74-64 on Tuesday night.

Hadley was 10-of-12 shooting, 3 of 3 from 3-point range, and made 9 of 11 from the free-throw line. Scott made 5 of 5 from the field and finished with 11 points, 10 rebounds and two blocks.

Louisville (11-5, 4-1 ACC) has won five straight. The Cardinals visit Pittsburgh Saturday (TV: Live on ESPNU at noon).

Chase Hunter made three 3-pointers and led Clemson (12-4, 4-1) with 15 points on 6-of-10 shooting and Ian Schiefelin added 10 points and 10 rebounds. Jaeden Zackery scored 12 points and Jake Heidbreder 10.

Chauncey Wiggins scored

in the lane to give Clemson a six-point lead, tied for its biggest of the game, with 3:13 remaining in the first half. James Scott threw down a dunk 7 seconds later, Hadley scored seven consecutive points and Reyne Smith hit a 3-pointer before Hepburn made two free throws with 37 seconds left to cap a 14-0 run. Viktor Lahkin made 1 of 2 from the free-throw line to cut Clemson's deficit to 42-35 at halftime.

Heidbreder sandwiched a pair of 3-pointers around another 3 by Zackery to make it a two-point game about 9 minutes into the second half but Khani Rooths answered with a 3-pointer before Hadley added a layup, two free throws and a basket in the paint to give Louisville a 65-54 lead with 7:21 to play. The Tigers trailed by at least nine points the rest of the way.

Top-ranked Vols routed by No. 8 Gators

BY MARK LONG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Tennessee coach Rick Barnes walked into the locker room and delivered a brief message to his downtrodden team: "This is good for us."

At least in the long run.

The top-ranked Volunteers became the last Division I team to lose this season, getting thumped 73-43 at No. 8 Florida on Tuesday night. This one was over shortly after it tipped.

Tennessee (14-1, 1-1 Southeastern Conference) missed its first nine shots, trailed by double digits a few minutes later and never recovered. The Volunteers got bullied in the paint, outmuscled on the boards and beaten up and down the court.

The result was the most lopsided victory against a No. 1 team since UCLA and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, then known as Lew Alcindor, beat Houston 101-69 in the 1968 Final Four.

"I have no idea some of the things I was looking out there watching," Barnes said. "I don't think it was our guys not trying to play hard. I just didn't think we played very smart."

Barnes believes his players started pressing amid the sluggish start and "lost our poise."

"I thought we had the wrong guys shooting the ball at the wrong time," he said.

Tennessee made just four shots in the first half and trailed by 19 at the break. And none of the adjustments Barnes made at halftime worked. The Gators (14-1, 1-1) extended their lead early in the second half and really started to pull away late.

Florida, which led by as many as 36 in the second half, ended up with a 55-37 rebounding advantage and outscored the Vols 40-14 in the paint and 22-3 on fast breaks.

"We're going to learn what we got to do to get better," Barnes said. "And we got to get better play, obviously, out of our front line. They've got to do a better job. I thought they had their way in there on

the front line, which I thought was really the difference in the game."

Florida's Alex Condon and Rueben Chinyelu dominated down low against Tennessee's Igor Milicic and Felix Okpara. Condon had 12 points and 12 rebounds for his second double-double, and Chinyelu finished with a career-high 15 boards.

More surprising: the Vols' leading scorer, Chaz Lanier, looked ordinary. Lanier, who spent the last four years playing at nearby North Florida before signing a name, image and likeness deal reportedly worth nearly \$1 million to transfer to Tennessee, scored 10 points on 3-of-16 shooting.

"We didn't want to give him no breathing room," said Alijah Martin, who led Florida with 18 points. "We know he's an unbelievable talent, unbelievable shooter. And that was the game plan, just don't give him no space. Don't give nothing easy."

The point total was Tennessee's lowest during Barnes' 10 seasons in Knoxville.

Florida, meanwhile, looked much more like the team that started 13-0 than the one that lost 106-100 at Kentucky last weekend. The Gators were one of four unbeaten a week ago — along with Oklahoma and Drake — but Tennessee was the last one standing.

And the Gators were hell-bent on ending UT's run in Gainesville. Florida topped a No. 1 team at home for the first time in six tries and extended its home winning streak to 16 games.

The key? After giving up 14 3-pointers at Rupp Arena in Lexington, the Gators held the Vols to 4-of-29 shooting from behind the arc.

"I'm incredibly proud," Florida coach Todd Golden said. "But now our biggest thing is this can't be the highlight of our season. It's awesome in the moment, and we're going to enjoy it. But it certainly won't feel as good if we don't go and find a way to win (at Arkansas) on Saturday."



David Campbell

Hanover's Sammy Berman (2) tracks Transylvania's Sierra Kemelgor during Wednesday's college basketball game at Collier Arena.

HANOVER

FROM PAGE B1

Malachi McNair scored 10 points and had eight rebounds off the bench to lead Hanover. Kyle Crim had nine

points and Coleman Sater scored eight. Madison's Luke Miller and Jack Miller scored five points each.

Hunter Penn had 15 points and 10 rebounds to lead Transylvania.

Hanover, now 6-7 overall and 2-4 HCAC, hosts Earlham on Saturday and hosts Rose-Hulman on Wednesday.

Allen leads Bills into playoffs for 6th straight year

BY JOHN WAWROW
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Josh Allen has a long list of doubters dating to his humble beginnings at central California’s Reedley community college.

It’s not often that the Buffalo Bills quarterback gets an opportunity to amusingly confront one of them during a celebrity golf tournament, like he did with Pro Football Hall of Famer and former Broncos executive John Elway some 18 months ago.

“Whether it was two holes or two shots in on the driving range, I brought it up pretty quickly,” Allen said Wednesday, recalling questioning Elway on why the then-Denver GM passed on selecting him at No. 5 in the 2018 draft — two picks before Buffalo traded up to choose the raw but athletic prospect out of Wyoming.

Allen declined to go into more detail, instead calling Elway an “awesome man,” and adding, “I’ve got a lot of respect for him.”

Elway still remembers the encounter with Allen, and what happened on draft day by referring to it as “probably my biggest mistake of my GM days,” during an appearance on Barstool Sports’ “Pardon My Take” podcast in July.

Though Elway has since acknowledged his remorse having dissipated with the arrival of rookie Bo Nix this season, his selection of defensive end Bradley Chubb over Allen remains timely.

On Sunday, Allen and the AFC East champion Bills (13-4) enter the wildcard playoff round hosting the seventh-seeded Broncos (10-7), who are in the postseason for the first time since winning the

Super Bowl in 2015.

Since 2018, the Broncos had nine quarterbacks — from Case Keenum to Russell Wilson — start at least one game before Nix finally solidified the position.

Allen, 28, has Buffalo in the playoffs for a sixth straight year. He has progressively answered pre-draft questions regarding his accuracy and mechanics by setting most every franchise single-season passing and scoring record.

It has been quite a year for Allen, who is among the front-runners for the NFL MVP award. He has overcome the loss of Buffalo’s top wide receivers in Stefon Diggs and Gabe Davis. He was also twice referred to as overrated, once by an anonymous NFL executive cited by ESPN in July, and again in August, when he was voted the NFL’s most overrated quarterback in an ESPN poll of 103 anonymous players.

Allen, at the time, referred to the poll results as a term of endearment, while saying his only frustration is never being asked to vote.

“There’s two things I can control. It’s my attitude and my effort,” Allen said Wednesday about his detractors. “And what everybody else says, that’s their own prerogative.”

Allen’s 76 career wins, 262 total touchdowns and 30,595 total yards are the most by an NFL player in his first seven seasons. Though he failed to top 4,000 yards passing for the first time since 2019, Allen combined to top 40 total touchdowns (28 passing, 12 rushing and one receiving) for a fifth straight season.

SEE **BILLS/PAGE B4**

Bengals fire defensive coordinator, 3 other assistants after missing playoffs

BY JEFF WALLNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI — The defensive issues that contributed to the Cincinnati Bengals missing the playoffs led to major changes on Monday, when four assistants were fired — three on that side of the ball.

Defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo was dismissed along with linebackers coach James Bettcher, defensive line coach Marion Hobby and offensive line coach Frank Pollack.

Anarumo held the job for the past six seasons — coach Zac Taylor’s entire tenure.

“Just as I evaluate everything within the organization, I just felt like we needed to make a change,” Taylor said Monday. “We’ll start that process immediately, evaluating where we need to go and who we want to bring in to take us to the next level.”

Those moves were hardly a surprise after Joe Burrow had the best statistical season of his career, leading the NFL in passing yards (4,918) and touchdown passes (43), but Cincinnati finished 9-8 and fell short of the AFC’s seventh and final playoff spot. The Bengals lost four games in which they scored 30 or more points.

Although the Bengals won their final five games, a poor start to the season was too much to overcome. They lost their opener to New England, which finished 4-13, and won just two of their first seven games.

“We’re all disappointed in the position that we put ourselves in,” Taylor said. “It is unacceptable to



start the way that we started. We have a lot of talent on this team. It’s sickening that we’re not in the playoffs with an opportunity to keep this thing going.”

Slow starts have plagued the Bengals throughout Taylor’s tenure. The best two-game start under Taylor is 1-1. The Bengals started 0-3 this season. They are 7-14-1 in September under Taylor.

“It’s on me, as the head coach, to make sure we come out of the offseason, we come out of training camp, ready to hit the ground running from game one,” Taylor said. “Those aren’t things you can run from when you’re in my shoes.”

The defense improved later in the season, but the damage was done. The Bengals lost 44-38 to the Steelers. They led by 10 points on three occasions in the second half but lost 41-38 in overtime to the Ravens. They also scored 33 points and lost to the Commanders.

There was plenty of individual brilliance in Cincinnati’s fourth straight winning season.

Ja’Marr Chase became the fifth receiver since 1970 to lead the NFL in receptions (127), receiving yards (1,708) and touchdown catches

(17), with the TD receptions tying Carl Pickens’ franchise record.

Defensive end Trey Hendrickson led the NFL with 17 1/2 sacks.

“Any time you don’t make the playoffs, it’s a failure,” Burrow said. “That’s what you’re aiming for every year. That’s why you work so hard is to be at your best in the end. We just weren’t able to find an extra win there early in the season that would put us in a better spot.”

DECISION TIME

The Bengals have big decisions to make this offseason regarding contract extensions for receivers Tee Higgins, who played this season under the franchise tag, and Chase, who was in talks about an extension during the preseason, while also addressing the team’s other needs.

“There’s certainly a process we’re going to have to undergo with a lot of players on our team,” Taylor said. “We’ve got a lot of great players. That’s a process we’ll start out in January and February talking through every player on our roster and how it all fits.”

ALMOST

Running back Chase Brown missed the season finale with an ankle injury and finished 10 rushing yards shy of 1,000 for the season. A more balanced offense next season could benefit both Brown and the team.

“From about the halfway point in the season, every game was do or die for us, and you lean toward putting the ball in Joe’s hands in those situations,” Taylor said. “We have to do a better job of controlling games in the first half. That allows you to lean more on the run game.”

Steichen eager to move forward with Colts

Defensive coordinator won’t be back

BY MICHAEL MAROT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS — A determined and disappointed coach Shane Steichen walked into the Indianapolis Colts’ complex Monday morning already knowing his fate.

He’s returning for a third season, and general manager Chris Ballard is coming back, too.

The same can’t be said for defensive coordinator Gus Bradley, who won’t be retained. Steichen said in a statement Monday night that he thought it was time for a change.

Still to be determined is whether Steichen will make any other coaching changes. He knows another mediocre season, or worse, won’t suffice, and it’s his job to make sure next season is not a repeat of his first two with the Colts, who finished 8-9.

“We want to put a winning product on the field that our fans can be proud of,” Steichen said about 13 hours after owner Jim Irsay announced that the coach and GM would return. “I can promise you this, I’m going to be relentless in my pursuit to get this thing going in the right direction.”

Steichen’s top priority will be to keep the development of 22-year-old quarterback Anthony Richardson on track.

Richardson orchestrated fourth-quarter road comebacks against the New York Jets and New England, capping the win over the Patriots by calling his own number on the decisive 2-point conversion with 12 seconds left.

But inexplicable moments and games proved costly for Richardson and the Colts.

Jonathan Taylor’s apparent TD run at Denver that would have given the Colts a 20-7 lead in the third quarter was instead determined to be a fumble that resulted in a touchback because Taylor dropped the ball before crossing the goal line. Indy eventually lost



31-13, a defeat that helped extend its four-year playoff drought.

The Colts lost twice to Houston by a total of five points, lost yet again at Jacksonville and somehow managed to allow the New York Giants, the league’s lowest-scoring team, to put up 45 points in a playoff-eliminating loss in Week 17.

“Since I’ve been a Colt, it was our worst year defensively,” Pro Bowl defensive tackle DeForest Buckner said. “I felt like, at times, we were just a bunch of individuals out there. At times, I felt like there was just a bunch of guys out there playing football. It didn’t look like a unit out there, at times, and it showed.”

The loss to the Giants was followed by reports of players being late to team meetings and rehab, something Steichen tried to explain away by acknowledging most teams have players occasionally show up late. Even former players began to question the standards and accountability inside the team complex.

So when Irsay opted to give Steichen and Ballard another chance in 2025, it came with a caveat — if

things don’t improve dramatically in 2025, they may not be back in 2026.

“Those are going to be the conversations we’re going to have because, obviously, it wasn’t good enough this year,” Steichen said. “We’re going to have those tough conversations moving forward.”

RICHARDSON'S NEXT STEP

The 22-year-old Richardson showed flashes of his potential. He ran well and when paired with the resurgent Taylor — who was selected to his first Pro Bowl since 2021 — the Colts showed their ground game could be one of the league’s best.

But Richardson missed six more games — four because of injury, two when he was benched after taking himself out of a game against Houston because he was tired. And his completion percentage, 47.7%, was the lowest of any starting quarterback in the league.

Steichen knows Richardson must become more consistent for the Colts to take a big step forward.

“He made strides. I mean, he won us some games, he made some big-time plays,” Steichen said. “Did the first two years go the way that we wanted them? No, but it’s (a) learning experience, it’s a growth experience for him and everybody.”

CAPTAIN TALK

Buckner and linebacker Zaire Franklin are two of the defense’s most promi-

nent voices, and both understand they must be part of the solution.

Last week, Franklin apologized for saying on his podcast in October, “I want to play a team I knew we gonna spank, like the Giants.” Franklin said he’d spend this offseason rethinking several things, including whether to continue the podcast.

Buckner, meanwhile, intends to use his voice another way — recruiting free agents.

“This offseason, there’s going to be some changes, and sometimes those changes are going to be uncomfortable for people,” he said. “There will be uncomfortable conversations.”

INJURY REPORT

Receiver Michael Pittman Jr. was scheduled to have scan on his injured back Monday to determine whether he needed surgery. Pittman was expected to go on injured reserve in Week 6 but instead continued to play with a fracture in his back.

He said Monday he suffered started feeling back pain during a joint practice against Arizona at training camp. He still managed to catch 69 passes for 808 yards.

Starting safety Julian Blackmon also said Monday he suffered a torn labrum in his shoulder injury during the season opener. The injury kept him out of Indy’s next game, but Blackmon returned in Week 3 and didn’t miss another game. He can become a free agent in March.

Dodgers trade 2B Lux to Reds after signing South Korean Kim

LOS ANGELES — Second baseman Gavin Lux was traded from the Dodgers to the Cincinnati Reds on Monday, three days after Los Angeles agreed to a \$12.5 million, three-year contract with infielder Hyeseong Kim.

Los Angeles received minor league outfielder Mike Sirota, a grand-nephew of Hall of Fame pitcher Whitey Ford, and a pick in competitive balance round A of the amateur draft in July, currently No. 37 overall.

Lux had a \$1,225,000 salary last year. He is eligible for arbitration this winter and next, then can become a free agent after the 2026 World Series. The 27-year-old was a member of the Dodgers’ World Series championship teams in 2020 and ‘24.

“He’s a guy who has a chance to come in and be in our lineup and lengthen that lineup out,” Reds president of baseball operations Nick Krall said. “Just us being able to add a left-handed hitter that hits well against right-handed pitching.”

Lux returned last year after missing the 2023 season with a torn right ACL sustained during a spring training game against San Diego that February. He was moved from shortstop to second base in 2024 after defensive struggles early in spring training.

Los Angeles plans to use Mookie Betts at shortstop this season. Betts started 61 games at shortstop last year but none after June 16, when he broke his left hand on a pitch from

Kansas City’s Dan Altavilla. Betts returned Aug. 12 and primarily played right field. He finished with 12 starts at second base and 42 in right field.

Chris Taylor, Tommy Edman and Betts also are second base options in addition to Kim.

Lux made 117 starts at second last year and batted .251 with 10 homers and 50 RBIs. He has a .252 career average with 28 homers and 155 RBIs in five seasons, all with the Dodgers.

Krall said Lux could see time at second base, third, shortstop, outfield and designated hitter. Second baseman Matt McLain is expected back for Cincinnati after missing last season following shoulder surgery.

Second baseman Jonathan India, who made 132 starts for the Reds last year, was traded to Kansas City on Nov. 22 with outfielder Joey Wiemer for right-hander Brady Singer.

Sirota was a 16th-round pick of the Dodgers in the 2021 amateur draft, but he didn’t sign and played college ball at Northeastern. He was drafted by the Reds on the third round last summer with the 87th overall pick and signed for an \$863,300 bonus.

To open a roster spot for Lux, right-hander Roansy Contreras was designated for assignment. Cincinnati claimed Contreras off waivers from Texas on Dec. 19.

Earlier in the day, the Reds acquired right-hander Owen White from the Texas Rangers for cash.

Turning 65?

You have questions, we have answers!

With 70 years experience in helping people make the right choices concerning medicare coverage.

Call today to find out how! 812-273-1187

KASPER INSURANCE
AND RETIREMENT SERVICES
YOUR FRIENDLY AGENTS

220 Clifty Drive,
Suite C, Madison, IN

Siakam’s 26 points leads Pacers to 129-113 win over Bulls

Siakam made 11 of 17 shots from the field to help Indiana win its fourth straight, all by 10 or more points. Bryant had eight rebounds as the Pacers continued climbing the Eastern Conference standing with their 10 win in 13 games.

Zach LaVine led the Bulls with 31 points. Coby White had 19 points and five assists as Chicago lost for the first time in three games and just the second time in six.

Indiana led 36-18 early in the second quarter. Chicago never got within single digits again.

The Pacers led by 34 in the third quarter. Chicago cut the deficit to 14 several times in the fourth quarter.

TAKEAWAYS

Bulls: Chicago played its way back into the play-off mix with its recent resurgence. But trying to out-tempo the lightning quick Pacers wasn’t bound to work, especially in Indianapolis. It didn’t and now the Bulls trail 2-0 in the season series.

Pacers: Indiana has played its best stretch of basketball over the past month, and this time the Pacers didn’t even need center Myles Turner to keep the momentum going. Turner missed the game with an illness, but the Pacers continued rolling.

KEY MOMENT

When Haliburton left late in the first quarter, it appeared as if Chicago might dig itself out of a 23-18 deficit. Instead, the Pacers poured it on, charging to a 36-18 early in the second quarter, forcing Chicago to play catch-up for the rest of the game.

KEY STAT

The Bulls had 14 first-half turnovers, compared to four for Indiana. They only had four in the second half, but to put it in full contest Haliburton now has 51 assists and five turnovers in Indiana’s last six games.

BILLS

FROM PAGE B3

He oversaw an offense that was the league’s first to score 30 TDs passing and rushing, while throwing just six interceptions, the fourth-fewest by an NFL starter, down from a career-worst 18 last year.

“He’s as special as they come,” offensive coordinator Joe Brady said. “The only thing he cares about is finding ways to win football games. I think our team kind of embodies that as well because of him.”

Allen has three times rallied Buffalo from 10-point deficits, including a season-opening 34-28 win over Arizona, in which the Bills scored 24 points on five of six drives spanning halftime. And he nearly did it a fourth time with three touchdowns passing and rushing in a 44-42 loss to the Los Angeles Rams.

His most memorable play of the season was a rugged 26-yard touchdown run on fourth down to seal a 30-21 win over the previously unbeaten Kansas City Chiefs in Week 11.

“I’m sure there’s a lot of

HALIBURTON PACES WIN OVER NETS

Tyrese Haliburton scored 23 points, Benne-dict Mathurin added 20 and the Indiana Pacers beat the Nets 113-99 on Monday night in Brooklyn.

Pascal Siakam contributed 19 points and Obi Toppin scored 11 for the Pacers, who have won three straight and nine of 12.

Day’Ron Sharpe had 16 points and 13 rebounds, Tyrese Martin added 15 points and Noah Clowney scored 14 for the Nets, who have lost 10 of 13.

Indiana led by 24 points in the third quarter before the Nets went on a 12-0 run over the last 4:30 of the period to trim the deficit to 78-70.

Brooklyn fell behind by 14 early in the fourth quarter and got within 10 before the Pacers responded with a 14-2 spurt, capped by a dunk and a 3-pointer from Toppin that increased the lead to 105-83 with 4:33 left.

Indiana shot 53% from the field and hit 41% beyond the arc before half-time to take a 55-39 lead at the break as the Nets had their lowest-scoring first half of the season.

TAKEAWAYS

Pacers: Andrew Nem-bhard was the lone starter not to score in double figures. He went 3 for 8 and finished with eight points.

Nets: Brooklyn’s previous season-worst first half was a 41-point effort against San Antonio on Dec. 27.

KEY MOMENT

During the 14-2 run late in the fourth quarter, Haliburton made a 3-pointer and on the next possession was dribbling just past halfcourt when he zipped a pass to Mathurin for a dunk.

KEY STAT

The Pacers shot 50.6% from the field and 91.3% (21 of 23) from the free-throw line. They held the Nets to 30.3% shooting from long distance.

people with those regrets,” coach Sean McDermott said, when asked about Elway’s remorse.

“We’re fortunate that we have Josh Allen and he’s been a great person not just on the field, but he’s out in the community making an impact,” he added, referring to Allen’s charitable work. “That’s just as important as the level of play to which he’s played, in particular this year. I think most of us, Josh included, accept those challenges and use them in the right way.”

Allen was the third of five quarterbacks chosen in the first round of the 2018 draft, and joins Baltimore’s Lamar Jackson as the only two who have not changed teams yet. And it’s difficult to fault the Broncos, who had just signed Keenum in free agency to take over the starting job in 2018. Chubb is a two-time Pro Bowl selection who was traded to Miami in 2022.

Allen was philosophical in reflecting back on what might have been.

“I mean hindsight is 20-20,” Allen said. “Who knows how it would have worked out. I’m just glad I’m where I’m at.”

		Jefferson Switzerland	Trimble/ Carroll	FRIDAY EVENING												
				6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM		
3	WAVE	6	2	WAV..	NBCN..	WAV..	News	Happy's	Lopez..	Dateline NBC (N)				WAV..		
4	WTTV	4		CBS4..	CBSN..	BigBa..	Sheldon	NCIS: Sydney		Fire Country		S.W.A.T.		CBS4..		
5	WLWT	2		News	NBCN..	WLWT	Hollyw..	Happy's	Lopez..	Dateline NBC (N)				News		
8	WISH	12		News (N)		Inside..	ET (N)	Penn & Teller		Whose	Whose	News (N)		News		
9	WCPO	23		News	World..	News	Extra	Shifting	Abbott	20/20 (N)				News		
11	WHAS	11	4	News	World..	ET (N)	Inside..	Shifting	Abbott	20/20 (N)				News		
15	WKPC	13		Ameri..	Edition	PBS News (N)		Comm..	Week	Masters "How It Feels to Be Free"				BBCN..		
19	WXIX	10		FOX19	FOX19	Wheel	Jeopar..	Basketball UCLA at Maryland (N)		FOX19 NOW at 10						
32	WLKY	5	5	News	CBSN..	Wheel	Jeopar..	NCIS: Sydney	Fire Country		S.W.A.T.			News		
34	WBKI	7	7	Neighb..	Conners	Sheldon	BigBa..	Penn & Teller		Whose	Whose	BigBa..	Sheldon	LastM..		
41	WDRB	8	9	News	News	FamFe..	FamFe..	Basketball UCLA at Maryland (N)			WDRB News at 10					
A&E	28	36		The First 48		The First 48		The First 48 (N)		Cold Case (N)		Cold Case (N)		First48		
AMC	29	26		(4:00) ♣ Shawsha...		♣♣♣ The Green Mile ('99) David Morse, Tom Hanks.								Movie		
COM	45	59		Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Family..	Family..	Family..		
DISC	31	38		Gold Rush		Gold Rush		Gold Rush (N)		(c:05) Last W. (N)		(c:05) Gold Rush		Gold		
DISN	25	29		Bluey	Big City	Big City	Big City	♣♣♣♣ Finding Nemo		ZOM..		(c:10) Kiff (c:35) Kiff		Marvel..		
ESPN	32	44		GameDay (N) (Live)			Playoff		Cotton Bowl Ohio State vs. Texas (N) (Live)					Sports..		
FREE	18	40		(c:55) ♣♣♣ Brave ('12)				♣♣♣ Beauty and the Beast ('17) Emma Watson.						700Club		
FX	40	28		♣♣♣ Spider-Man: Far From Home ('19)						♣♣♣ Spider-Man: No Way Home ('21)						
HBO	201	17		♣♣♣ Mrs. Doubtfire ('93)						(c:10) ♣ Keeping Up With the Joneses			Bill Maher (N)	BillMa..		
MAX	270	73		(c:15) ♣♣ Paranoia ('13)						♣♣ Black Adam ('22) (P)			(c:05) ♣ A Private War			
NEWSNTN	20	20		The Hill (N)		On Balance (N)		Cuomo (N)		Dan Abrams		Banfield (N)		Cuomo		
PARMT	35	41		TwoM..	TwoM..	TwoM..	TwoM..	♣♣ Grumpy Old Men ('93)						♣ Grumpier Ol..		
PARSHO	221	16		♣♣♣♣ The Untouchables ('87)				Dexter: Sin		The Agency		♣ Murder Company				
TMC	233	74		Movie	♣ The Bigfoot Trap ('23)			♣♣ Hannibal Rising ('07)			(c:05) ♣ Disquiet ('23)					
TNT	27	43		(4:55) ♣ Avengers: Infinity War				♣♣ Black Adam ('22) Dwayne Johnson.						♣♣♣ Shazam!		
USA	26	33		(5:30) ♣♣ Men in Black 3 ('12)				WWE Friday Night SmackDown (N) (Live)						Bel-Air		

			Jefferson Switzerland	Trimble/ Carroll	SATURDAY EVENING										
					6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10	10:30	11
3	WAVE	6	2		WAV..	NBCN..	Chefs	Song	The Wall		Dateline NBC		SNL		WAV..
4	WTTV	4			(4:30) NFL Football				To Be Announced						CBS4..
5	WLWT	2			News (N)		NBCN..	Let'sT..	The Wall		Dateline NBC		SNL		News
8	WISH	12			(5:00) College Basketball			FamFe..	ABBA: Against All Odds			News (N)		News	
9	WCPO	23			TBA		TBA		Jeopardy!		Extreme		Extreme		TBA
11	WHAS	11	4		World..	News	Ent. Tonight (N)		Jeopardy!		Extreme		High Pote (N)		News
15	WKPC	13			Antiques (SP)		TimFa..	RedGr..	Kentuc..	Kentuc..	♣♣♣ Big Eyes ('14) Amy Adams.			Austin	
19	WXIX	10			Beat	Game..	Wheel	Jeopar..	Basketball Indiana at Iowa (N)			FOX19 (N)		Special	
32	WLKY	5	5		(4:30) NFL Football				To Be Announced						News
34	WBKI	7	7		(5:00) College Basketball			TBA	ABBA: Against All Odds			FamFe..		FamFe..	House..
41	WDRB	8	9		The Equalizer		The Rookie		Basketball Indiana at Iowa (N)			News (N)		News	
A&E	28	36			Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage
AMC	29	26			(4:00) ♣ Matrix ...			♣♣♣ The Matrix ('99) Keanu Reeves.					♣♣♣ The Replacements		
COM	45	59			(5:30) ♣♣♣ Just Go With It ('11)			♣♣ Big Daddy ('99)			♣ Wedding Crashers				
DISC	31	38			Expedition		Expedition		Expedition		Expedition		Expedition		Expedi..
DISN	25	29			(c:15) ♣♣♣ Strange World ('22)			StuGo	StuGo	StuGo	StuGo	Kiff	Kiff	Kiff	
ESPN	32	44			Basketball Tennessee at Texas (N)			College Basketball			College Basketball				
FREE	18	40			(5:15) ♣♣♣ Zootopia			(c:45) ♣♣♣ Wreck-It Ralph ('12)			(c:50) ♣ Ralph Breaks the Internet				
FX	40	28			(4:00) ♣ Spider-...			♣♣♣ Thor: Ragnarok ('17) Chris Hemsworth.			♣ Thor: Love & Thunder				
HBO	201	17			(5:30) ♣ Straight Outta Compton			♣ Silver Linings Playbook (P)			(c:05) ♣ Look Into My Eyes				
MAX	270	73			(c:20) The Knick		The Knick		♣♣♣ Sisters ('15) Amy Poehler.			♣♣♣ The Color Purple			
NEWSNTN	20	20			NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation		NewsN..
PARMT	35	41			(5:00) ♣ Indiana Jones & t...			♣♣♣♣ Raiders of the Lost Ark ('81)			♣ Indiana Jones & the L...				
PARSHO	221	16			(4:30) ♣ There W...		(c:15) ♣♣♣ Final Destination (P)			♣♣♣ Slingshot ('24) (P)			Movie		
TMC	233	74			Movie	♣ First Shift ('24)			♣ Confessions of a Dangerous Mind			♣♣♣ Hardcore Henry			
TNT	27	43			(5:15) ♣♣♣ Black Adam ('22)			Wrestling: Collision (N) (Live)			♣♣♣ Aquaman ('18)				
USA	26	33			9-1-1 "Red Flag"		9-1-1		AMA Supercross Series Round 1 (N) (Live)						9-1-1

		Jefferson Switzerland Trimble/ Carroll	SUNDAY EVENING												
			6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10	10:30	11		
3	WAVE	6	2	WAV..	NBCN..	Happy's	Football	(c:15) NFL Football							
4	WTTV	4		TBA	CBS-N..	60 Minutes (N)		NCIS: Origins		NCIS: Origins		NCIS: Origins		CBS4..	
5	WLWT	2		News	NBCN..	Happy's		Football (c:15) NFL Football							
8	WISH	12		News	Inside..	♣♣♣ The Wedding Planner ('01)				Whose	News	Sports	News		
9	WCPO	23		News	World..	Videos (N)		Shifting ♣♣♣♣ Marley & Me ('08)		Owen Wilson.		News			
11	WHAS	11	4	World..	News	Videos (N)		Shifting ♣♣♣♣ Marley & Me ('08)		Owen Wilson.		News			
15	WKPC	13		Last/..	KeepUp	Last Tango		Scarlet (N) (SP)		Creatures (SP)		Vienna (N)		Velvet	
19	WXIX	10		(4:30) NFL Football			Postga..	Simpso..	Univer..	Burgers	Krapo..	FOX19 (N)		FOX19	
32	WLKY	5	5	To Be Announced				NCIS: Origins		NCIS: Origins		NCIS: Origins			News
34	WBKI	7	7	BigBa..	BigBa..	♣♣♣ The Wedding Planner ('01)				Whose	The Grand		ModF..		
41	WDRB	8	9	(4:30) NFL Football			Postga..	Simpso..	Univer..	Burgers	Krapo..	News (N) (Live)		News	
A&E		28	36	The First 48		The First 48		The First 48		The First 48		The First 48		Ozark.	
AMC		29	26	♣♣♣♣ Independence Day ('96) Will Smith.						Mayfair (N)		(c:10) Sanctuary		Mayfair	
COM		45	59	(5:30) ♣♣ Big Daddy ('99)		♣♣♣♣ Wedding Crashers ('05)						Family.. Family..		Family..	
DISC		31	38	Homestead Rescue (N)				Homestead Rescue (N)				Homestead		Homes..	
DISN		25	29	Big City	Big City	Big City	Big City	♣♣♣♣ Ralph Breaks the Internet			StuGo	StuGo	Hamst..		
ESPN		32	44	(5:00) Basketball		2025 Australian Open Tennis First Round (N) (Live)								Sports..	
FREE		18	40	(5:10) ♣ Toy Stor...		(c:15) ♣♣♣♣ Toy Story 3 ('10) Tom Hanks.				(c:45) ♣♣♣♣ Toy Story 4 ('19)					
FX		40	28	(4:00) ♣ Avengers		♣♣♣♣ Captain America: Civil War ('16) Chris Evans.						♣ Captain Ame..			
HBO		201	17	(c:15) ♣♣♣♣ St. Vincent ('14)				♣♣♣♣ Jason Bourne ('16)				♣ Charlie & the Chocola...			
MAX		270	73	(c:15) ♣♣♣ What's Your Number?				♣ Forgetting Sarah Mars...				♣ Everything Everywhere All at O...			
NEWSNTN		20	20	NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation (N)		NewsNation		NewsN..	
PARMT		35	41	(4:50) ♣ Hangove...		♣♣ Grown Ups ('10) Adam Sandler.				♣♣♣ The Hangover Part II ('11)					
PARSHO		221	16	(5:30) ♣♣♣♣ Face/Off ('97)				Dexter: Sin		The Agency (N)		Dexter: Sin (N)		Agency	
TMC		233	74	(c:05) ♣♣♣ The Gambler ('14)				♣ Breathe ('24)		(c:35) ♣♣♣♣ Shutter Island ('10)					
TNT		27	43	(5:00) ♣♣♣♣ Aquaman ('18)				♣♣♣♣ Transformers ('07) Shia LaBeouf.						Movie	
USA		26	33	Law-SVU		Law-SVU		Law-SVU		Law-SVU		Law-SVU		Law-S..	

Expanded CFP still leads to usual powers in Final 4

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Now that the expanded 12-team College Football Playoff is down to four teams remaining — the size of the field the previous 10 seasons — things really don't look that much different.

The final quartet includes two teams from the Big Ten, one from the Southeastern Conference and third-time semifinalist Notre Dame (13-1). It is the third time in four seasons that the sport's two richest leagues fill three of the final four spots, despite all the changes to get to this point and with neither having its regular-season champion still playing.

Ohio State (12-2) and Penn State (13-2) give the Big Ten two semifinalists for the second time in three years. Even without former CFP champions Alabama and Georgia, the SEC extended its streak as the only conference with a final four team every season when league newcomer Texas (13-2) made it for the second year in a row

"I really believe this is a premier football conference in America because of the week-in, week-out tasks that it requires physically and mentally," Longhorns coach Steve Sarkisian said. "To be back in the final four wearing that SEC patch on our jersey, we're going to do our best to represent it because this is a heck of a conference."

Texas was the Big 12 champion when it made its first CFP appearance last season before moving with Oklahoma to create a 16-team SEC. The Longhorns (13-2), whose only losses were to Georgia in the regular season and the SEC title game, are the only one of last season's four playoff teams to even make it into this 12-team field.

Penn State is a first-time semifinalist, and in this format has already had to win two postseason games. Its 16th game this season, two more than ever before, will come in the Orange Bowl semifinal against Notre Dame on Thursday night.

The Buckeyes' last national

title came during the initial four-team playoff 10 years ago with a win over Oregon at AT&T Stadium, the home of the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, where the Buckeyes play Texas in the Cotton Bowl semifinal on Friday night. This is their fifth semifinal. Only Alabama (eight) and Clemson (six) have made it more times.

MORE THAN HALF THE SPOTS

While there are more playoff spots after tripling the size of the field and with guaranteed berths for five conference champions, the Big Ten and SEC took seven of the 12 slots (four Big Ten and three SEC).

Those leagues combining to take more than half the playoff spots has also been the case historically. During 10 seasons with the four-team format, there were 40 playoff slots. The SEC filled 12 of them (30%) and the Big Ten had nine (22.5%). The ACC was next with seven (17.5%), even without a semi-

finalist since 2020.

"The SEC won a lot of these for a while, but this year, here, we've got two strong traditional programs from up north," said Notre Dame offensive coordinator Mike Denbrock, whose program plays an ACC-heavy schedule each season while remaining an independent. "Michigan broke through last year, and Washington was in there, too. I don't know if it's a trend, but since it's us, I hope it is."

BIG TEN VS. BIG TEN FOR THE TITLE?

The Big Ten still has the opportunity to do what only the SEC has done in the playoff era.

Only the SEC, with Alabama involved each time, has had two of its teams play for the national title since the inception of the Bowl Championship Series in 1998 before that evolved into the CFP in 2014.

Alabama and Georgia met in CFP title games at the end of the 2017 and 2021 seasons, splitting

those games. The Crimson Tide were 2011 champs after beating LSU in that BCS championship game

If Penn State and Ohio State both advance to the CFP title game Jan. 20 in Atlanta, it would would set up a rematch of the Nittany Lion's only regular-season loss, 20-13 at home on Nov. 2.

NFL-LENGTH SCHEDULE

Texas and Penn State could potentially play 17 games, the length of an NFL regular season. Both have their 16th game this week.

The Longhorns lost to Georgia in the SEC championship game, then beat Clemson in home in a first-round game and Big 12 champion Arizona State in the Peach Bowl.

Penn State lost the Big Ten title game to top-ranked and then-undefeated Oregon, which then had a first-round bye before losing to Ohio State in the Rose Bowl. The Nittany Lions beat SMU and Boise State to advance.



Marta Lavandier — staff, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Notre Dame head coach Marcus Freeman, left, and Penn State head coach James Franklin shake hands Wednesday in front of the trophy during a news conference for the Orange Bowl NCAA College Football Playoff game in Dania Beach, Fla.

Trip to CFP title game on line for Notre Dame vs. Penn State

BY TIM REYNOLDS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DANIA BEACH, Fla. — It's been a long time since either Notre Dame or Penn State reached college football's mountaintop as national champions. It was 1988 for the Fighting Irish, 1986 for the Nittany Lions. There's been good seasons and bad seasons in the three-plus decades that have followed, coaching changes and a complete overhaul of what the sport looks like.

Yet here they are — back again, on the doorstep of a title shot.

The loss to Northern Illinois is no longer relevant to Notre Dame. The losses to Ohio State and Oregon don't matter to Penn State right now. The Irish (13-1) and Nittany Lions (13-2) face off in the Orange Bowl on Thursday night, the first of two College Football Playoff semifinal games; the other is Friday when Texas takes on Ohio State.

"Obviously, you don't get to this point in the season without being good in all three phases," Penn State coach James Franklin said. "So far, got a ton of respect for what we've seen on film and what

we've studied, and we've got a lot of work to do."

Notre Dame has won 12 straight games, its longest streak since a 16-game run spanning the 2019 and 2020 seasons. Its lone loss was a Week 2 defeat at home, 16-14 to Northern Illinois. In the old days of college football — maybe as recently as last year, even — such a loss could have doomed playoff chances. Not anymore.

Notre Dame got here by topping Georgia in the CFP quarterfinals at the Sugar Bowl, a game that was delayed one day because of the truck attack in New Orleans. Penn State got its semifinal slot by topping Boise State at the Fiesta Bowl two days earlier.

"The mental preparation time has been the same," Irish coach Marcus Freeman said. "For us, it was just a normal week. It was a Saturday to a Saturday, as we look at it in terms of game week. I think the coaches, we probably were a little bit behind to start just because of the travel and in that aspect, but physically our guys were good. Our guys were good, and we're going to be ready to roll."



John Bazemore — staff, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Texas players celebrate victory Jan. 1 after a quarterfinals College Football Playoff game against Arizona State in Atlanta. Texas won 39-31 in two overtime periods.

Texas, Ohio State arrive ahead of storm for CFP semifinal

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

GRAPEVINE, Texas — The games have been stacking up for Texas, which after playing in the Southeastern Conference championship game had to win two extra games in this expanded College Football Playoff to get back to the same spot they were last season.

At least the Longhorns didn't have to travel far Wednesday for this CFP semifinal, their 16th game this season. It was only about a 45-minute flight from their campus to North Texas, where they play Ohio State in the Cotton Bowl on Friday night.

"You can't take it for granted. Most people don't get opportunities to still be playing, and then to still be playing, I mean, down the road from Austin, that's another blessing," All-America cornerback Jahdae Barron said after the team's arrival.

Both the Longhorns (13-2) and Buckeyes (12-2) got to the Dallas area as scheduled ahead of an expected winter storm that was forecast bring 2 to 4 inches of snow Thursday, along with sleet and rain.

With the game played inside at AT&T

Stadium, the home of the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, the weather won't have any direct impact on the actual game that determines which will advance to the national championship. Penn State and Notre Dame will play the other semifinal Thursday night at the Orange Bowl.

"They said there's gonna be freezing up here," Ohio State cornerback Jordan Hancock said with a laugh after the Buckeyes arrived from Columbus, where the high temperature Wednesday was 24 degrees. "We came up here and I'm like, 'Dang, it's pretty warm up here.' So it's definitely great to be down here."

Ohio State is playing in the Cotton Bowl for the second year in a row, but there is so much more riding on the outcome of this one.

The Buckeyes last time were coming off a loss to Michigan in their regular-season finale, their first loss of the season knocking them out of the Big Ten title game and playoff contention. Starting quarterback Kyle McCord had transferred and two-time All-America receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. opted out of playing last season's game in Arlington, a 14-3 loss to Missouri.

Notre Dame adapts on fly to longest season, changing schedule

BY MICHAEL MAROT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Notre Dame receiver Beaux Collins will remember this College Football Playoff run for several reasons and one of them is how he sprinted through the team's New Orleans hotel hallways like a fun-loving child.

That is how some of the Fighting Irish coped with an unexpected day off before last week's Sugar Bowl, a timeline driven by tragedy after a man used his speeding truck as a weapon in the nearby French Quarter, killing more than a dozen people.

Collins, his Notre Dame team-

mates and their coaches are now in Florida, about to face Penn State in the Orange Bowl for a trip to the national championship game. They have deftly navigated a number of challenges in their march through the postseason.

"It was wild," Collins said. "Hearing the news was definitely sad, hearing about the people who lost their lives. So we had to take the time to reflect on how fortunate we are to still be alive, breathing, being able to play a game called football. There are people out there, putting their lives on the line for us; we have to acknowledge that."

While each school selected for the first 12-team playoff has its own tales of overcoming adversity, Notre Dame's playoff journey has been historic.

The Irish (13-1) have already played — and won — more games than any team in the program's illustrious history and have moved within two wins of snapping a 36-year national championship drought, the school's longest since claiming its first title in 1924.

The playoff semifinal Thursday night against the Nittany Lions (13-2) will mark the deepest into January that Notre Dame has ever played; one more win would

extend the Irish's longest season to 16 games. Coach Marcus Freeman responded by reducing the amount of contact at practice to keep players fresh, good training for the NFL's 17-game schedule.

Players took their finals before the first-round victory over Indiana. At least classes don't resume until next Monday.

Notre Dame's challenges stretch far beyond football and include family, faith and fate.

The Irish split their first-round practice week balancing finals and football, something near and dear to cornerback Christian Gray's mother, who still tracks

his grades. Notre Dame spent the following week planning for second-seeded Georgia while taking time off to celebrate the Christmas holiday that is so sacrosanct at this Catholic institution.

Then last Wednesday everything suddenly was put on hold by what unfolded in the French Quarter. Inside the team hotel, players started reflecting on life while contemplating what they could do to help.

That's when center Pat Coogan and right guard Rocco Spindler decided somebody needed to lead Notre Dame onto the field with an American flag. Coogan did.

Northern Illinois set to join Mountain West for football in 2026

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
DEKALB, Ill. — Northern Illinois has accepted an invitation to join the Mountain West for football only in 2026.

The Huskies will go from the Midwest-based Mid-American Conference to a league in which the easternmost school is in Colorado Springs, Colorado. They will join Air Force, Hawaii,

Nevada, New Mexico, San Jose State, UNLV, UTEP and Wyoming in the Mountain West.

"This move will open new opportunities for our student-athletes, expand the reach and strengthen the national brand of Huskie Football as they represent NIU and compete for championships the hard way, and the right way," NIU presi-

dent Lisa C. Freeman said Tuesday.

Mountain West Commissioner Gloria Nevarez said NIU's "history of football success and its commitment to academic excellence" were draws.

The Mountain West has been rebuilding since Boise State, Fresno State, San Diego State and Colorado State agreed to join the Pac-

12, which is trying to restock after all but two of its schools left for other conferences last summer. The Mountain West will also have other schools — UC Davis and Grand Canyon — joining in some sports in 2026.

Northern Illinois has played 39 seasons in the MAC over two stints from 1975 to 1985 and since 1997. It was in the Big West Con-

ference in football from 1993 to 1995 and operated as an independent from 1986 to 1992, as well as in 1996.

The Huskies went 8-5 this season and pulled off a stunner at then-No. 5 Notre Dame in September. The win vaulted them into The Associated Press poll for the first time in 11 years.

The Huskies have consistently been among the top

teams in the MAC for two decades. They've played in 15 bowl games in that span, and the 2012 team even made the Orange Bowl with star quarterback Jordan Lynch.

"The impact of this move to the Mountain West is going to be felt throughout our entire department and university," athletic director Sean Frazier said.

Jeanty to enter NFL draft

BOISE, Idaho — Ashton Jeanty, who rushed for the second-most yards in a season in major-college football history and was runner-up for the Heisman Trophy, will leave Boise State to enter the NFL draft.

Jeanty announced his decision on social media Tuesday, one week after the Broncos' season ended with a loss to Penn State in the College Football Playoff.

Jeanty ran for 2,601 yards in 14 games, just behind the

SEE **DRAFT/PAGE B8**

EMPLOYMENT

NOW HIRING!
Facilities Manager for
Jefferson County Courthouse
Job Description available
online: www.jeffersoncounty.in.gov/jobs
Email resume to sarah.morgan@jeffersoncounty.in.gov

GUN & KNIFE SHOW

Evansville, IN.
Vanderburgh County
Fairgrounds
January 11th & 12th
Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-3.
\$6 admission
For more info.
Call 765-993-8942

SERVICES

We Buy
Scraps Cars
\$\$\$Top prices paid\$\$\$!
Fast pickup!
\$\$\$Cash\$\$\$ Paid for
scrap cars & trucks
Call 812-933-8151
or text

EMPLOYMENT

Job Posting

Part time position open at
Scott County Museum Director.
24 hours weekly with some
weekend hours. Duties include
communicating with public
organizations, greeting visitors,
financial responsibilities, grant
writing and secretarial tasks.
Individuals must have ability
to interact with public, monitor
budgets and utilize various
forms of technology. Experience
in museum operation is
preferred. For information or to
apply, contact 812-595-3678.
Application deadline is January
27, 2025.

VISIT US ONLINE www.madisoncourier.com



LEGAL NOTICE DUKE ENERGY INDIANA, LLC

Public notice is hereby given to affected property owners pursuant to 170 IAC 4-9-4(f) that within two (2) to six (6) weeks of the date of this notice, weather permitting, Duke Energy Indiana, LLC will be performing vegetation management as part of its power line maintenance program in the area described below. As part of this project, one of its contractors that employ qualified utility line clearance tree workers will be trimming and/or removing trees and brush to clear the lines of vegetation to provide safe and reliable electric service. Vegetation management will be performed in/near Madison, Hanover, Holton, Canaan on or near streets identified below:

Beginning at the substation located near the intersection of US 421 & Michigan Rd to include the areas around & near: N of W 5th St, E of E Recovery Rd, S of W CR 250 S, W of N East Prong Rd

Beginning at the substation located at the intersection of N Madison Ave & Cynthiana Dr to include the areas around & near: N of E 1st St, E of N 600 W, S of W Chicken Run Rd, W of N Borcharding Rd

The date this notice is published initiates the two (2) week period for calculating implied consent by an affected property owner under 170 IAC 4-9. If you have any questions, you may contact the Duke Energy Vegetation Management toll free number, 866-385-3675.

Duke Energy Indiana, LLC
Vegetation Management
Department

hspaxlp



LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

DLC#:C306-171
By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me directed from the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Switzerland County, Indiana, in Cause No. 78C01-2203-MF-000051, wherein U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely in its capacity as Indenture Trustee of CIM Trust 2021-NR1 was Plaintiff, and Lisa M. Mckittrick, Jeffrey G. Mckittrick, CACH, LLC, Portfolio America Asset Management, LLC assignee of HSBC Card Services, Inc., Asset Acceptance, LLC, Mariner Finance, LLC and General Electric Credit Union, were the Defendants, requiring me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree with interest and costs, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder, on the 4th day of February, 2025, at 11:00 A.M. of said day, at 405 Liberty St, Vevay, IN 47043, the fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Switzerland County, Indiana:

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE IN SWITZERLAND COUNTY, STATE OF INDIANA: LOT NO. 12 AND LOT NO. 13 IN BLOCK '23', OF THE PLAT OF THE 'OHIO VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COMPANY'S SUBDIVISION (S/C) OF LOTS, LOCATED IN POSEY TOWNSHIP, SWITZERLAND COUNTY, INDIANA, WHICH PLAT THEREOF APPEARS OF RECORD IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF SAID SWITZERLAND COUNTY, INDIANA, IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 1, THEREOF, AND, LOCATED IN POSEY TOWNSHIP, SWITZERLAND COUNTY, INDIANA, BEING LOT NO. 11 IN BLOCK 23 OF THE PLAT OF THE 'OHIO VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COMPANY' SUBDIVISION OF LOTS, AS SHOWN IN DEED RECORD 89, PAGE 209 OF THE RECORDS OF SWITZERLAND COUNTY, INDIANA.

78-11-07-111-001.000-006 & 78-11-07-111-002.000-006 and commonly known as: 2312 South Drive, Patriot, IN 47038.
Subject to all liens, encumbrances, rights of redemption, easements and restrictions of record not otherwise foreclosed and extinguished in the proceedings known as Cause # 78C01-2203-MF-000051 in the Circuit Court of the County of Switzerland Indiana, and subject to all real estate taxes, and assessments currently due, delinquent or which are to become a lien.

Said sale will be made without relief from valuation or appraisal laws. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagee, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's Attorney.

Doyle & Foutty, P.C. Brian Morton
41 E Washington St, Switzerland County Sheriff
STE 400 Indianapolis, Posey Township
IN 46204 2312 South Drive, Patriot, IN 47038

The Sheriff's Department does not warrant the accuracy of the street address published herein

SHERIFF PLEASE SERVE:

Lisa M. Mckittrick Jeffrey G. Mckittrick
2312 South Drive 2312 South Drive
Patriot, IN 47038 Patriot, IN 47038

MANNER OF SERVICE: Sheriff MANNER OF SERVICE: Sheriff

Daniel A. Cox
600 Vine Street,
Suite 2500
Cincinnati, OH 45202

MANNER OF SERVICE: Certified Mail
DOYLE & FOUTTY, P.C. IS A DEBT COLLECTOR

hspaxlp

CLASSIFIED ADS

PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

CALL TO PLACE YOUR AD IN PRINT AND ONLINE IN INDIANA

0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Acculevel. Your foundation repair and basement waterproofing experts. Whether basement, crawl space or concrete slab we'll guide you on the right path to a healthy home. Act now! Up to \$600 off. Restrictions apply. Call for a free consultation. 1-877-229-0197

Become a Published Author. We want to Read Your Book! Dorrance Publishing-Trusted by Authors Since 1920. Book manuscript submissions currently being reviewed. Comprehensive Services: Consultation, Production, Promotion and Distribution. Call for Your Free Author's Guide 1-888-965-1444 or visit dorranceinfo.com/hoosier

Call LeafGuard and say goodbye to gutter cleaning for good. No cleaning. No leaking. No water damage. No more ladder accidents. Get LeafGuard today and be protected for life. FREE estimate. Financing available. 20% off total purchase (Restrictions may apply.) Call 1-866-641-9158

Consumer Cellular - the same reliable, nationwide coverage as the largest carriers. No long-term contract, no hidden fees and activation is free. All plans feature unlimited talk and text, starting at just \$20/month. For more information, call 1-855-572-5165

DIRECTV- All your entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Directv and get your first three months of Max, Paramount+, Showtime, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package \$84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-888-885-8931

0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-844-244-7025 [#6258](http://www.dental50plus.com/hoosier)

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-877-414-2352 today!

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. Plus 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-877-361-4260

FreedomCare. Let your loved ones care for you and get paid! Paid by Medicaid. Choose family or friends as your paid caregiver. Check your eligibility today! Call FreedomCare now! 1-844-563-4012

Get a break on your taxes! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-833-587-2145 today!

JOIN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

CRIME CHECK

CONTACT YOUR POLICE, TODAY!

0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waiving ALL installation costs! (Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. (Offer ends 3/30/25.) Call 1-866-937-1159

New windows from Window Nation. Special money saving offer - zero down, zero payments, zero interest for TWO years AND buy 2 windows and get 2 FREE! Offer is valid for select models. Labor not included. Other restrictions apply. Call Window Nation today! 866-553-0725

Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 877-930-3271

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-866-953-2203 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

Prepare for power outages with Briggs & Stratton® PowerProtect(TM) standby generators - the most powerful home standby generators available. Industry-leading comprehensive warranty - 7 years (\$849 value.) Proudly made in the U.S.A. Call Briggs & Stratton 1-877-798-0270.

Fill Your Purse Through
the Classifieds

0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-855-743-1911

We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-855-655-7718

Wesley Financial Group, LLC Timeshare Cancellation Experts Over \$50,000,000 in time-share debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 877-329-1207

When you want the best, you want Omaha Steaks! 100% guaranteed and delivered to your door! Our Butcher's Deluxe Package makes a great gift and comes with 8 FREE Burgers ONLY \$99.99. Call 1-866-309-8556 and mention code 77318GER or visit www.omahasteaks.com/Deluxe9878

0300 PETS

Reelsville - FOR SALE
Eight Week Old Chihuahua Puppies \$300 Each
(423)621-0368

Leave forests and parks clean. Forest Service, U.S.D.A.

0500 MERCHANDISE

BRAZIL - *FOR SALE*
Electric Hospital Bed w/ remote & 2 mattresses 1 never used, \$500 OBO.
(812) 448-2873

0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

200 Bank St.
Large 2 bedroom, 2½ bath, townhome in perfect location. Recently remodeled end unit. Available now. \$1,200 per month/\$1,000 security deposit. Call for application (812) 599-6570.

MADISON- CBJ Properties One bedroom apartments on Madison Hilltop. Clean and quality maintained. Starting at \$600/mo. plus electric. Laundry facilities available. References, background check and deposit required. 12-month lease only. No smoking. Call (812)265-6050 for an app.

MADISON- CHATEAU MANOR - Quiet hilltop neighborhood with sidewalks and shade trees at corner of Cragmont and Mouser. Spacious 2BR Apartments with renovated kitchen and bathroom, dishwasher, washer/dryer hookup, Abundant closet space and deck. Rent \$700 - \$795. Deposit \$650. References required. Visit chateaumanagerapts.com or Call (812)273-3375

Madison- **MADISON HEIGHTS** Quiet, park-like setting. Fast and friendly maintenance. Hilltop complex, centrally located behind Big Lots. Apartments and townhomes: \$875-1200/mo. To apply, visit dogwoodmanagement.com or call (812) 273-5057.

0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

MADISON- SUGGETT SCHMIDT PROPERTIES- Now accepting applications for a spacious 2BR, 1 bath duplex with attached garage in our 55+ development. Completely remodeled. Convenient Madison hilltop location on quiet dead end street. Back deck overlooks creek and woods. Friendly, full time maintenance and office staff. Proud to be voted Madison's Best! Check out our website www.suggett-schmidtproperties.com to learn more and click contact us to download an application or call 812-265-2020 and leave message.

MADISON - The Presidential Estates & Windridge Apartments. Now accepting applications for 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedroom apartments. Applications are taken Mon., Wed. & Fri. from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Rent based on income. Apply at Rental Office, located at 2855 Windridge Dr. Equal Housing Opportunity Call (812)273-3363 T.D.D.#1-800-743-3333

0800 TRANSPORTATION

Greencastle - FOR SALE
2012 Ford Escape \$1,500.00
(765)653-0695



Show & Sell. Find & Buy.

AUTOMOTIVE

HELP WANTED

GARAGE SALES

REAL ESTATE

PETS / ANIMALS

The LOCAL Classifieds are still the preferred choice for buying, selling and finding the best deals in print or online.

Verlander, Giants agree to 1-year, \$15M contract

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
AP BASEBALL WRITER

SAN FRANCISCO — Justin Verlander and the San Francisco Giants have agreed to a \$15 million, one-year contract, according to a person with direct knowledge of the negotiations.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Tuesday because the deal was pending a physical.

It's the latest big move by new Giants President of Baseball Operations Buster Posey since he was hired in September to replace Farhan Zaidi.

San Francisco also signed free agent shortstop Willy Adames to a \$182 million, seven-year contract in December.

This will be the 20th major league season for Verlander, a three-time AL Cy Young Award winner who turns 42 next month. He would join a Giants rotation led by All-Star righty Logan Webb.

Verlander went 5-6 with a 5.48 ERA in 17 starts for the AL West champion Houston Astros last year. He opened the season on the injured list with shoulder inflammation. He also was on the IL from June 18 to Aug. 21 because of neck discomfort.

The right-hander had a 9.26 ERA in five September starts and was left off Houston's postseason roster when the team was swept by Detroit in an AL Wild Card Series. He became a free agent after he failed to pitch 140 innings, a total that would have triggered his ability to exercise a \$35 million

conditional player option.

After the Astros were eliminated from the playoffs, Verlander said he thought he had "a lot more to give" next season and beyond.

"I definitely feel like I want to continue to pitch and compete and I'm not ready to step away yet," he said in October.

Verlander, a Virginia native who played college ball at Old Dominion, was selected by Detroit with the No. 2 overall pick in the 2004 amateur draft. He made his big league debut with the Tigers in 2005.

The 6-foot-5 ace spent his first 12-plus seasons with Detroit. He won his first Cy Young Award and was voted AL MVP after he went 24-5 with a 2.40 ERA in 2011.

He was traded to Houston in August 2017 and helped the team capture the franchise's first World Series title that same year. He won two more Cy Young Awards and another championship during his first stint with the Astros.

Verlander signed an \$86.7 million, two-year contract with the New York Mets as a free agent in December 2022. The nine-time All-Star made 16 starts for New York before he was traded back to Houston for two minor leaguers.

Verlander is 262-147 with a 3.30 ERA in 526 career starts. He is baseball's active leader in wins, strikeouts (3,416), innings (3,415 2/3), starts and complete games (26). He also has a 17-12 record with a 3.58 ERA in 38 career postseason appearances.

Chiefs better because of injuries, adversity, not just mental resilience

BY DAVE SKRETTA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The injuries and adversity that Kansas City had to overcome on its way to earning the No. 1 seed in the AFC playoffs and a first-round bye could be exactly what propels the Chiefs to an unprecedented third consecutive Super Bowl title.

Not just because they've been forced to develop mental resilience, either.

But because the result was a roster that is simply better.

Every time the Chiefs lost someone to injury, they managed to find a capable replacement. And when whoever was hurt was able to return, the Chiefs were left with a deeper and more talented position group that they will carry into the postseason.

Start with wide receiver. The Chiefs lost Marquise Brown to a shoulder injury on the first play of the preseason, then Rashee Rice to a season-ending knee injury in Week 4. Almost out of desperation, they traded with the Titans for three-time All-Pro DeAndre Hopkins. And now that Brown is back on the field, he and Hopkins give Kansas City a formidable one-two punch.

Then consider running back. When Isiah Pacheco



David Zalubowski | Associated Press
Kansas City Chiefs head coach Andy Reid watches from the sidelines alongside defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo, right, during the second half of an NFL football game against the Denver Broncos Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, in Denver.

fractured his fibula in Week 2, the Chiefs signed erstwhile star Kareem Hunt, who was recovering from offseason sports hernia surgery. Hunt became a stalwart in the backfield until Pacheco returned 2 1/2 months later, and now those two give Kansas City a dangerous thunder-and-lightning tandem.

"We've built up to the perfect spot. We've gotten better and better," quarterback Patrick Mahomes said. "When you have that many weapons out there, it's hard for the defense to account for."

It's not just wide receiver and running back, either, though those are the two most obvious positions.

The Chiefs struggled mightily to protect

Mahomes' blind side this season, cycling through rookie Kingsley Suamataia and second-year pro Wanya Morris. They ultimately signed former Pro Bowl left tackle D.J. Humphries, and while he hurt his hamstring in his season debut, he is healthy now and gives Kansas City some depth at a crucial position.

In the secondary, the Chiefs lost cornerback Jaylen Watson to a fractured ankle that at first looked as if it would be a season-ender. To provide some depth, they reached out to veteran Steven Nelson and signed him out of retirement, and now he could be a part of the mix even with Watson returning to practice — and potentially able to return

for the postseason.

The trick now is to make sure all those pieces are sharp whenever the Chiefs play again.

Coach Andy Reid chose to risk rust rather than injury in his team's regular-season finale, ultimately sitting Mahomes and a bevy of starters in a 38-0 loss in Denver. That means many of them will have gone at least 24 days between games when they step on the field at Arrowhead Stadium next week for the divisional round of the playoffs.

The Chiefs will play the lowest remaining seed after the wild-card weekend, which would mean Denver if it can win at Buffalo. If the No. 7 seed Broncos lose and sixth-seeded Pittsburgh wins at Baltimore, the Steelers would be headed to Kansas City.

If the Bills and Ravens both win, the Chiefs would face the winner of the Texans-Chargers game.

"The primary thing is to make sure we stay sharp at all areas," Reid said. "We want to stay sharp mentally and physically, and that's our responsibility to do that. How we manage the time — I make sure I do that practice-wise, and then the guys go out and work on that, keeping themselves in the right timing, the right way."

BUSINESSES & SERVICES

Directory

BUILDING MATERIALS

HILLTOP

SUPPLY AND HARDWOOD
(859)240-4157

- Solid Hardwood Flooring starting at .99 per sqft
- Pine Shiplap starting at .49 per lf
- Waterproof LVP
- Trim, Baseboard, Stairs, and MORE
- Sandpaper, Stain, and Polyurethane
- 2 convenient locations
- Delivery available

BUILDING MATERIALS

MADISON METALS

We Manufacture
Premium Metal Roofing and Trim

- Delivery Available • Buy Factory Direct
- Next Day Service • Custom Trim Available

Call for Pricing
Scratch & Dent - \$1.25 per linear foot
5854 N. U.S. Hwy. 421
Madison, IN • 812-273-5214

CONSTRUCTION

B & Z CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION

"We lay it down right the first time."

Poured Basement Walls
Retaining Walls • Driveways
Sidewalks • Patios, etc.

30 years experience

Fully Insured
Free Estimates
Residential & Commercial

(812) 701-4522
(812) 265-6042
BZCONCRETE@MSN.COM

CONSTRUCTION

POST FRAME BUILDINGS

Built On Your Lot!
60 Years Experience
Large Selection of Colors & Sizes
Material packages available.

Gosman, Inc.
Madison, Indiana
812-265-5290

- 24x24x8 1-16x7 garage door 1-3" door \$8,995
- 30x40x10 1-16x8 garage door 1-3" door \$14,900
- 30x60x10 1-16x8 garage door 1-3" door \$19,500

CONSTRUCTION

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT AND YOUR FAMILY WITH QUALITY ROOF MAINTENANCE SERVICES FROM THE PROFESSIONALS.

Marcus Meadows
Insurance Relations Manager

SANDUSKY CONSTRUCTION

Make sure your roof maintenance, installation or repairs are being performed by a trusted and experienced professional. With many years of experience and a top-notch reputation in this community, we stand behind the quality and value of our work, so you don't have to worry.

INSURANCE ROOF SPECIALISTS

(502) 663-1069
www.gosmaninc.com

CONSTRUCTION

PETTIT Contracting LLC

Roofing

Roofing • Siding • Windows • Insulation
Decks • Remodeling

Insured • Free Estimates
Residential • Commercial

Licensed and Fully Insured
in Business since 2000

812-265-7663

16 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Owner/Roofing Specialists
www.pettitcontracting.com
joe@pettitcontracting.com

FENCING

Double L Fencing

High Tensile, Woven
Barb & Board Fencing
Free Estimates

812-599-8827
Leon King

FLOOR REPAIR

NEW HORIZONS TILE

Troy Bartosz, Owner
(812) 273-1645

- Ceramic, Marble and Granite Tile Installation
- Custom Built and Handicap Accessible Showers
- Back Splashes and Flooring

Free In-Home Estimates and Design Help
33 Years Experience

"Let me be weighed on honest scales, that God may know my integrity" Job 31:6

FENCING

ABC Fence

"A Better Choice"

- Privacy • ChainLink • Masonry • Pasture
- Split Rail • Brick • Ornamental • Porches & Decks

(812) 701-0502

LOCK SERVICE

LEE'S LOCK SERVICE, INC.

CERTIFIED • INSURED • LOCKSMITH

MON. thru FRI. 10am -5pm

RESIDENTIAL LOCKSETS REKEY PRICES:
IN SHOP RE-KEY STARTING AT \$5.00
KWIKSET & SCHLAGE RESIDENTIAL
YELLOW BRASS KEYS - ONLY 99¢ EACH
600 Green Rd. Madison, IN 47250
Ph. 812-274-9381 CELL: 1-812-820-2655
leeslockserviceinc.com

PLUMBING

RJ Plumbing

FULLY INSURED

- Sewer & Drain Cleaning
- Bathroom Remodeling
- Water & Sewer Line Replacement

812.599.1650

PLUMBING/ROOFING

Pro Tek Services

Heating and
Air, Electric,
Plumbing and
Roofing

Residential & Commercial Services

812-571-6706

ROOFING

B & R ROOFING & GENERAL CONTRACTING

- Decks
- Porches
- Garages
- Vinyl Siding
- Soffit
- Fascia

(812) 701-1705

ROOFING

Exterior Pro Roofing Inc.

COMMERCIAL ROOFING SPECIALISTS

- Flat Roofing
- Standing Seam Metal
- Asphalt Shingles

(812) 274-0444
www.ExteriorProInc.com

VISIT OUR SHOWROOM AT 2936 CLIFTY DR., MADISON, IN